

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Sunday School Notes

Friendship Baptist Church
Boyd, TX

Introduction

The Plan for our Study

- Examine the events in the earthly life of Christ chronologically as they appear in the Gospels
- Explain the historical and cultural context of these events
- The plan is to not go verse-by-verse through each of the Gospels, but to cover each event through the combined details of the Gospel narrative.

The Four Gospels

- God's plan was there should be written not one, but four biographies of Christ.
- Each serves a different purpose and shows the Life of Christ in a different light.
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are similar and are often called the Synoptic Gospels
- John is a more intimate, insider look at Christ's life and ministry

| | Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Written by | Matthew, also called Levi | John Mark | Luke the Physician | John the Apostle |
| Date | A.D. 50 | A.D. 55 | A.D. 60 | A.D. 90 |
| Target Audience | Jews | Romans | Greeks | Church |
| Pictures Christ As: | King, Messiah | Servant | Son of Man | Son of God |
| General Nature | Prophetic | Practical | Historical | Spiritual |
| Emphasizes | Christ is the fulfillment of prophecy | The actions and power of Christ | The historical fact of Christ | The deity of Christ |

Christ Before Bethlehem

- Christ is eternal - John 1:1-2
- Christ had a part in Creation - Genesis 1:26, Colossians 1:16-17
- Possible Old Testament appearances of Christ:
 - NOTE - passages with a * refer to the Angel of the Lord
 - To Joshua - Joshua 5:13-15
 - To Moses - Exodus 3:2-6*
 - To Gideon - Judges 6:1-23*
 - To Samson's parents - Judges 13:1-22*
 - To Abraham - Genesis 12:7-9, 18:1-33, 22:11-12*
 - To Jacob - Genesis 32:22-30, Hosea 12:3-4,
 - To Hagar - Genesis 16:7,13*
 - To Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego - Daniel 3:23-25
- I personally think that any time in the Old Testament that God is seen visibly that is is most likely Christ.

The Purpose of Christ's First Coming

- To reveal God the Father to man - John 1:18
- To be the Saviour - I John 4:14
- To be the Light of the world - John 12:46
- To seek and to save - Luke 19:10
- To be the sacrifice for sin - Hebrews 9:26
- To defeat Satan - I John 3:8

The Nature of Christ's First Coming

- Incarnation - Christ (God) became flesh (human)
- Christ was 100% God and 100% Man
- Philippians 2:5-8
 - "emptied Himself" - laid aside aspects of His Deity
 - "likeness of man" - took on human flesh
 - It is important to note that this was not sinful flesh - John 1:14, Romans 8:3
- His Humanity
 - Birth - Galatians 4:4
 - Human development - Luke 2:52
 - Subject to human frailties: fatigue - John 4:6; hunger - Matthew 4:2; thirst - John 19:28; slept - Matthew 8:24
- His Deity
 - Virgin Birth - Luke 1:35
 - His Power - ex. John 11:43-44

NEXT TIME:

- Setting the stage for Christ's First Coming

Preparing For Christ's Coming

Introduction

- Today we will look at the event's leading up to the Birth of Christ in Bethlehem.
- The angelic announcement of the coming of John the Baptist and Christ
- The miraculous birth of John the Baptist
- We get to see glimpses in the remarkable people God used to support Christ's mission
- These events take place in about 4 or 5 B.C.

1. Gabriel Announces John the Baptist's Birth - Luke 1:5-25

- The "course of Abia" (see 1 Chronicles 2:11-13) was the eighth in order, which would be in the month of Sivan (May/June)
- The lot fell on Zacharias to offer to offer incense in the Temple, and Gabriel appears to him when inside.
- I love similarities between Zacharias/Elisabeth and Abraham/Sarah (Genesis 18:9-15, 21:1-3)

2. Gabriel Announces Christ's Birth - Luke 1:26-38

- Easton's Bible Dictionary says regarding Jewish betrothal - "Men and women were betrothed when they were engaged to be married. This usually took place a year or more before marriage. From the time of betrothal the woman was regarded as the lawful wife of the man to whom she was betrothed (Deuteronomy 28:30; Judges 14:2,8; Matthew 1:18-21)"
- Gabriel is quite clear in his message to Mary: her virgin-born son would be the promised Messiah.
- Gabriel also announces to her the news about Elisabeth's baby, which was probably still a secret (Luke 1:24)

3. Mary visits Elisabeth - Luke 1:39-56

- Mary leaves Galilee to stay with Elisabeth in Judea.
- This is only for about three months (Luke 1:56), so it appears that the first trimester of Mary's pregnancy was spent here.
- The first time John the Baptist pointed someone to Christ he was still in the womb!

4. The Birth of John the Baptist - Luke 1:57-80

- If you do the math regarding Elisabeth's pregnancy, John the Baptist was born around Passover (March/April). John the Baptist is often compared to Elijah (Luke 1:17, Malachi 4:5-6). Today when Jews celebrate the Passover meal they prepare an extra cup for Elijah.

5. Joseph and the Angel - Matthew 1:18-25

- What must Joseph have thought about the news that his bride-to-be was expecting?
- Put her away privily - support her to live in shame and hiding

The Nativity

Introduction

- Today we will look at the event surrounding the Birth of Christ in Bethlehem.
- Yes, I know it is Easter. This is for everyone who only comes on Christmas and Easter!!! Just kidding. Sort of...

6. The Birth of Christ - Luke 2:1-7

- This passage has to be one of the most hotly debated and attacked in the Bible
- This occurs around the Feast of Tabernacles (September-October)
- Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem for a Roman census conducted around Jewish customs
- What is so funny about the debates surrounding the details in Luke 2:1-4 is not whether everything actually happened, just details about the timelines (the easiest thing in ancient history to mess up) from various sources not matching up.
- This fulfills the prophecy in Micah 5:2 that Christ would be born in Bethlehem

7. The Worship of the Shepherds - Luke 2:8-20

- The lambs used in sacrifices at the Temple and for Passover were raised in Bethlehem. Remember that David was a shepherd boy from Bethlehem.
- The first visitors to see the newborn King was not royalty, but the most humble of people and professions.

8. The Infant Christ is circumcised - Luke 2:21

- You cannot forget or overlook the fact that Jesus was a Jew.
- Done in accordance to Leviticus 12:1-3

9. The Infant Christ at the Temple - Luke 2:21-38

- The purpose of the visit is two-fold in Jewish customs:
 - To fulfill the ritual purification of Mary (Leviticus 12:4,6-8)
 - To “redeem” the first born son with five shekels (Numbers 18:15-16)
- Note that the offering of two birds was given, allowed only for the poor
- Two fixtures in the Temple, Simeon and Anna, make special worship of the baby

10. Visit of the Wise Men - Matthew 2:1-12

- It appears that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus stayed in Bethlehem for at least a few months after his birth.
- The Wise Men were *Magi*, highly educated priests from the area of present day Iraq or Iran. They were known as being very advanced in astronomy and science.
- Some sort of astronomical event (a lot of debate here) made them believe that the promised Messiah of the Jews was coming.
- Please note that in spite of all the nativity scenes they went to a house - vs. 11
- The gifts for kingly for such poor Jews. It is likely they financed the flight to Egypt.

The Childhood of Christ

Introduction

- Today we will look at the information we have on Christ's journey from infancy to manhood.
- The Bible says very little about the first thirty years of Christ's earthly life, but the few details give us a decent picture of the time period.
- There are obviously so many more questions than answers about this time of Christ's life. The Son of God dwelt in obscurity for the first 30 years of His earthly life. We don't necessarily need to know *what* He did during this time because we are certain about *who* He was.

11. Flight to Egypt - Matthew 2:13-23

- Christ would be under two years old, I think a few months old - 2:16
- The Slaughter of the Innocents
 - Herod's tries to kill the child Christ after being spurned by the Wise Men
 - Only record of this event is in Matthew
 - Estimates: Bethlehem's population - 1000, children under 2 - 20.
 - Very much in line with the character of Herod's final days:
 - He died of a terrible illness and was frankly insane in his later years
 - He had left plans to kill a large number of prominent Jews at his death to ensure that he would be mourned
 - 7 B.C. - had his sons Alexander and Aristobulus executed for suspected treason
 - 4 B.C. - had 42 Jews burned alive for removing a controversial golden eagle from the Temple and the deposed the High Priest who may have aided them
 - 4 B.C. - 5 days before his own death had son Antipater II executed for plotting to murder Herod
- In Egypt
 - Matthew points out the fulfilled prophecy in Hoses 11:1
 - There are a lot of crazy stories that have been invented about this time
 - Probably lasted less than a year since Herod's death was imminent
 - On return, they settle in Galilee to avoid Archelaus, one of Herod's sons who ruled over Judah and was so evil that he was deposed in A.D. 6.
 - Settle in Nazareth, a town of 500-2000 people

12. Visit to the Temple - Luke 2:41-51

- At Passover - one of the three Pilgrimage Festivals
- This may be in some way related to the modern Jewish Bar Matzvah
 - A Jewish boy was held to be responsible to follow the religious ordinances on his own at the age of 13.
- This is not a case of neglect on the part of Mary and Joseph.
- Of course Jesus knew the Law - He not only wrote it, He fulfilled it!
- Note that Christ's knowledge of the Law was based on his answers and his *questions*.

- I think His response tells us:
 - He knew who His Father was - “my Father”
 - He knew He had a greater mission - “my Father’s business”
 - He expected His earthly family to know about it - “How is it that ye sought me?”

13. The Childhood of Christ - Luke 2:39-40, 51-52

- From outside appearances I don’t think Christ seemed to be different than other children (except that He was perfect) - see Matthew 13:55
- He would have received a basic education from Mary and trained in a trade (carpentry) from Joseph
- He would probably have attended some sort of religious training at the local synagogue
- What we know of the “silent years” from Luke:
 - Grew up in Nazareth in Galilee - 2:39
 - Submitted to parental authority - “was subject unto them” - 2:51
 - Progressed developmentally as a human would:
 - Grew physically - “grew” - 2:40, “stature” - 2:52
 - Grew mentally - “waxed strong in spirit” - 2:40
 - Grew in human knowledge - “filled with wisdom” - 2:40, “wisdom” - 2:52
 - Grew in Spiritual power - “grace of God was upon Him” - 2:40, “favour with God” - 2:52
 - Grew in human society - “favour with... man” - 2:52
- Once again, let me state my personal opinion on Christ’s development
 - He was 100% God and 100% man
 - His humanity was like ours except that He was sinless perfection
 - He humbled (limited) Himself to grow and develop as a human
 - He did not become more God or come to the realization that He was God - He was God the entire time and He knew it.

Presenting the Messiah

Introduction

- Today we will look at the events leading up to and following the first public presentation of Christ as the Messiah.
- Our narrative picks up “in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar” - roughly A.D. 28

14. John the Baptist - Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-34

- His fulfillment of prophecy - Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1
- His lifestyle
 - clothes - camel’s hair with a leather girdle
 - food - locusts and honey - food of the poorest
 - home - wilderness in southern Judea
- His message
 - “repent” - turn from sin to righteousness
 - “be baptized” - outward sign of inward repentance
 - “kingdom of heaven is at hand” - fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies is coming
 - “prepare” - get ready because its coming
 - Called out the shallow religious leaders of the day
 - “one mightier than I cometh” - the Messiah was coming
- His ministry
 - Seems to have started at age 30 and lasted for six months before Christ’s Baptism
 - People flocked to hear him, many were baptized
 - He boldly announced the coming Messiah and pointed out who He was
- Compared to Elijah
 - NOTE - Elias is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Elijah
 - Similar in appearance - II Kings 1:8
 - Similar in personality
 - It is prophesied that Elijah (who didn’t die - 2 Kings 2:11) would return - Malachi 4:5-6

15. Baptism of Christ - Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-23

- Christ is “about thirty years of age” (Luke 3:23)
 - A man was considered to be “entering one’s full vigor”
 - A son could be publicly declared by his father to be his inheritor
- John protests (Matthew 3:14-15) because He knew who Christ was
- An appearance of the entire Trinity marks the beginning of Christ’s ministry
- Why was Christ baptized?
 - It was not because of His sins or need for repentance - HE HAD NONE!!!
 - It is Christ humbling Himself to even the ordinances that we mortals keep
 - It is Christ consecrating Himself for the ministry to come
 - It is an example for us to follow

16. Temptation of Christ - Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13

- Christ is put to the test before embarking on His earthly ministry
- The tester is Satan himself. Every test possible is applied over 40 days.
- Note that Christ defeats Satan through the Word of God
- Also note the Satan used the Word of God as a weapon by twisting, misquoting, and questioning it
- Why was Christ tempted?
 - To prove through testing Who and What He was.
 - To understand what we go through - Hebrews 2:18, 4:15

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| EVE - Genesis 3 | CHRIST - Matthew 4 | US - I John 2:15-16 |
| “the tree was good for food” | “stone be made bread” | “lust of the flesh” |
| “it was pleasant to the eyes” | “showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world” | “lust of the eyes” |
| “a tree to be desired to make one wise” | “cast thyself down”, angels will rescue - | “pride of life” |

Beginnings

Introduction

- Today we will look at the the very beginning of Christ's public ministry, from the first disciples to the first miracle.
- All of these events take place in Galilee, probably as Christ returns from the Temptation

17. The First Disciples - John 1:35-51

- People begin to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah and follow Him
- The great rabbis often had followers in similar fashion
- Andrew and an unnamed disciple - vs. 35-40
 - Follow Christ after John the Baptist's testimony
 - Some speculate that the unnamed disciple is the author, John
 - These two spend the day with Christ
- Peter - vs. 41-42
 - Brought to Christ by his brother Andrew
 - What's in a name?
 - Simon - Hebrew - "he has heard"
 - Cephas - Aramaic - "stone"
 - Peter, *Petros* - Greek - "rock"
- Philip - vs. 43
 - Called by Christ personally
- Nathaniel - vs. 45-51
 - Brought to Christ by his friend Philip
 - Nathaniel is at first skeptical, until He sees Christ's omniscience
 - Jews would often hide away under trees in private prayer and meditation
 - Some think that Nathaniel is the disciple known as Bartholomew - Matthew 10:3

18. The Marriage at Cana - John 2:1-12

- John clearly states that this is the first miracle (of approx. 35) - vs. 11
- Miracle - something supernatural, extraordinary caused by God
 - Used to prove Christ's power or deity - Acts 2:22
 - Gather a crowd and attract interest - Matthew 4:24-25
 - Help the hurting - Matthew 14:14
- It appears that a relative of Mary is being married in the nearby village of Cana
- There are many intricate rituals involved in a Jewish wedding that we could spend hours describing, but here's a basic breakdown:
 - Groom "bought" his bride and a marriage covenant arranged
 - Groom leaves for about a year to prepare new home
 - Groom leads a torch-lit procession to get his bride
 - Couple have a seven day "honeymoon", usually in his Father's house
 - Everybody celebrates for seven days
- It was the family's responsibility to provide food and refreshment for the week-long celebration. It was a great shame on the family to be caught ill prepared.
- Mary expected Christ to resolve the situation miraculously, Christ gently reminds her that He didn't come to perform miracles.
- 1 firkin is estimated to be about nine or ten gallons, meaning over 100 gallons was possibly created
- Don't focus on the wine - focus on the One who performed the miracle!

The First Passover

Introduction

- Christ celebrates the first Passover of His ministry in Jerusalem.
- This would be around April, A.D. 28.
- Christ's ministry is only a few months old when he bursts onto the scene in Jerusalem

19. Jesus Cleanses the Temple - John 2:13-25

- In the Temple complex, many animals "pre-approved" for sacrifices were sold
- The "Temple Tax" could only be paid in approved coins - the Tyrian Shekel
 - One half-shekel per man over 20 years old - Exodus 30:13-16, II Chronicles 24:4-14
 - The "moneychangers" exchanged other money for shekels, with about 11% interest
- These practices were not popular and many abuses abounded
- Christ is not questioned for His actions (they liked it), but His authority to do it - vs. 18
- Construction projects begun by Herod around the Temple around 20 B.C., ~46 years prior

20. Nicodemus - John 3:1-21

- One of the most beautiful and quoted passages in the Bible
- He privately seeks audience with Christ at night as someone of his status would face ridicule for speaking with Him.
- Major themes include the redemptive mission of the Messiah and the need for salvation

21. Further Ministry in Judea - John 3:22

- We see the popularity of Christ growing as people are baptized and follow Him.
- Jesus did so much more than what is recorded in the Gospels - John 21:25

22. John the Baptist's Testimony - John 3:23-36

- We see a glimpse of John's ministry after revealing Christ
- John knew his place and role and rejoiced in it - vs. 29
- His message of salvation cannot be clearer - vs. 36

23. John the Baptist is imprisoned - Matthew 4:12, 14:3-5; Mark 1:14, 6:17-20; Luke 3:14, 3:19-20; John 4:14, 3:19-20

- Herod Antipas
 - Took over a portion of his father Herod the Great's kingdom in 4 B.C.
 - His first wife was Phasaelis, daughter of Aretas IV of the nearby kingdom of Nabatea
 - On a visit to Rome he stayed with his half-brother Herod Philip I, and fell in love with Philip's wife Herodias
 - As a side note, it seems Herodias was also a granddaughter of Herod the Great, Herod Antipas' half-niece (I think...)
 - Herod Antipas divorced Phasaelis, who went home to her father in Nabatea.
 - Herodias divorced her husband and married Herod Antipas in 27 A.D.
 - Relations soured between Judea and Nabatea, and war would break out in A.D. 36.
 - John the Baptist boldly decried this marriage as sinful and incestuous.
 - Herod Antipas had John imprisoned in fear of the latter's preaching stirring up a rebellion.

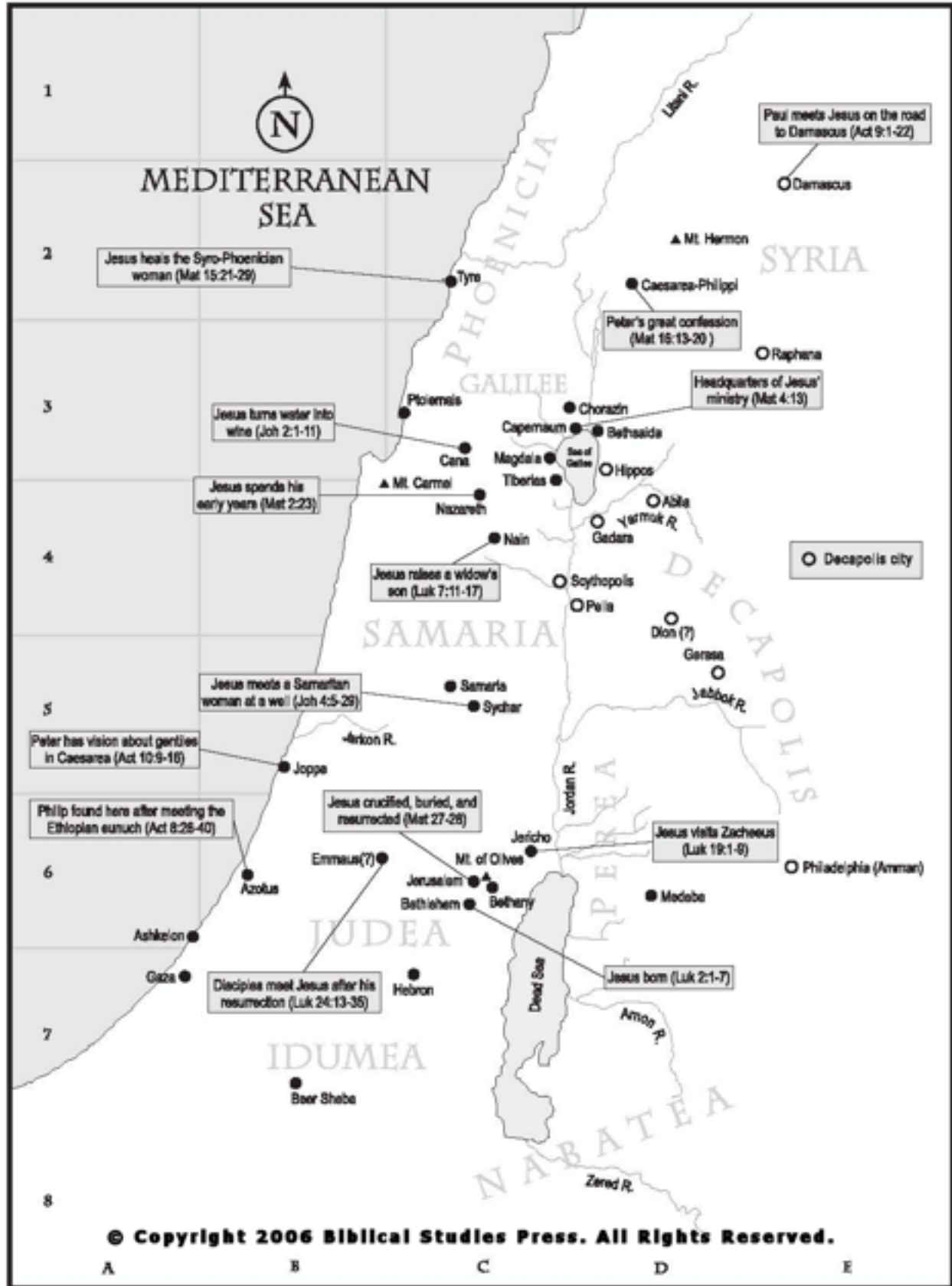


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Return to Galilee

Introduction

- Christ returns to Galilee after the imprisonment of John the Baptist
- His public ministry becomes more bold and more popular

24. The Samaritan Woman at the Well - John 4:4-42

- Samaria
 - Samaritans were descendants of settlers after Assyria's victories in 722 B.C.
 - Samaritans were half-Jew and half-Gentile by blood
 - They had a hybrid religion that reflected their heritage, and worshipped at Mt. Gerizim instead of Jerusalem
 - Jews hated and avoided them. They were considered "half-breeds" and heretics
- Sychar (sometimes called Shechem")
 - First capital of the Northern Kingdom in 930 B.C.
 - Location of Mt. Gerizim, Jacob's Well, and Joseph's Tomb
- It is highly unusual to be drawing water at this time of day (noon) and at this well (there actually was one closer to town). This shows the unpopularity and shame of the woman.
- Just as in His conversation with Nicodemus, our Lord uses symbolism to convey Heavenly truths and the hearer struggles to follow at first.
- The woman also assumes that Christ is there as a Jew to "correct" her and her ways
- Christ also proclaims Himself to be the Messiah - vs. 26
- The disciples had left town with no converts (probably didn't even try), but one woman turned the city upside down!

25. Ministry in Galilee - Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4:14-15, John 4:43-45

- His return had been anticipated and many were anxious to know more of the One who had caused such a commotion at the recent Feast.
- This also appears to be the first time He preaches publicly.

26. Nobleman's son is healed - John 4:46-54

- Distance from Cana to Capernaum is about 18 miles.
- The nobleman would be someone who served in the court of Herod Antipas
- Christ puts his faith to the test by refusing to do perform a sign or wonder as the Jews sought after
- Do we trust God Himself or trust in His actions? If we trust in what He does we are bound to be disappointed when He acts in a different time or manner than we expect.

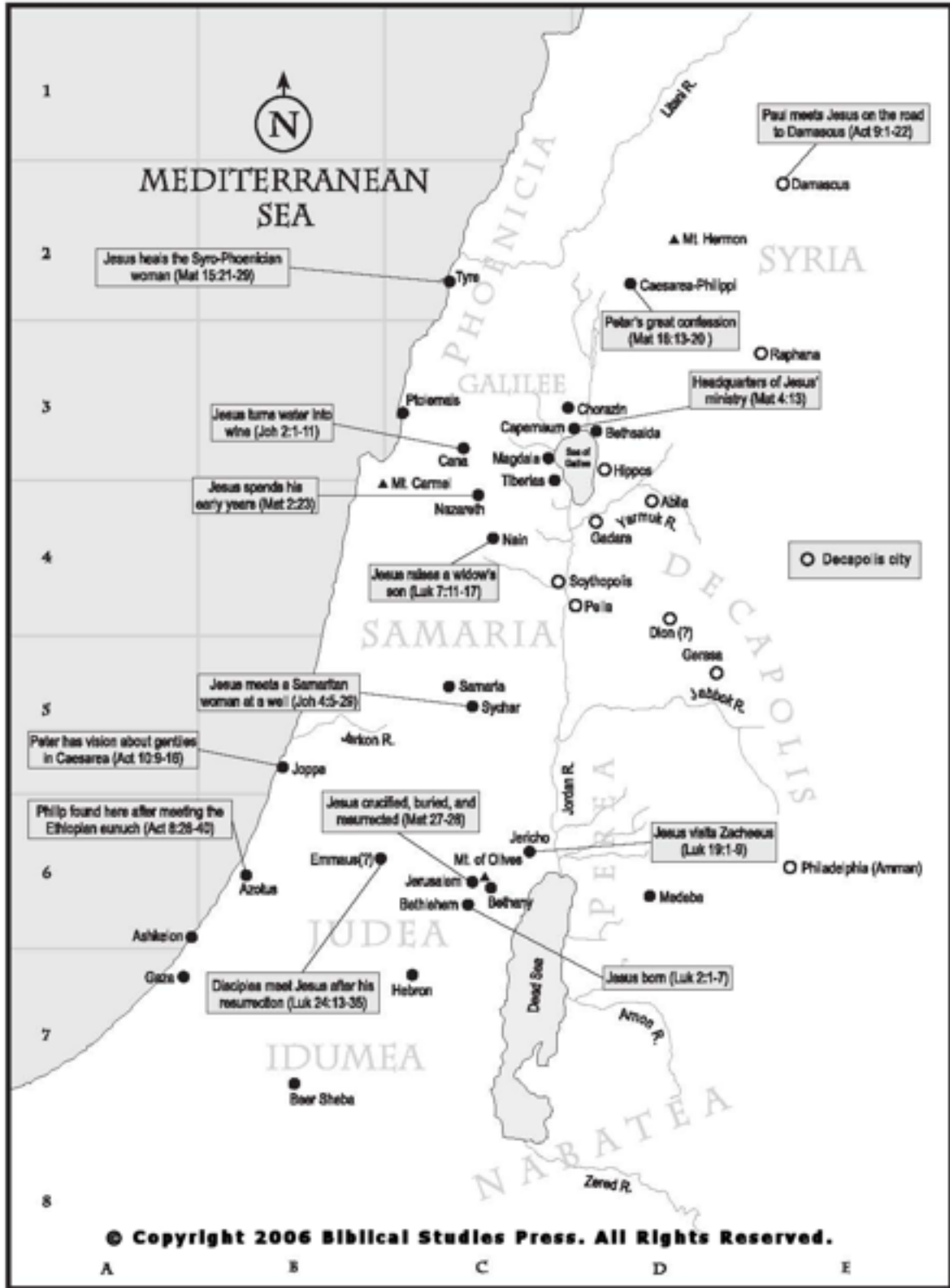


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Beginning in Earnest

Introduction

- Christ faces opposition and reaction in His hometown of Nazareth, leading Him to move to Capernaum.
- His public ministry is beginning to take shape with Him preaching in synagogues and taking disciples.

27. Rejected in Nazareth - Luke 4:16-31

- The Jewish Synagogue
 - The origins of the synagogue are unclear, but likely date back to at least the Babylonian Captivity in the 500's B.C.
 - *Synagogue* is Greek for "a place of meeting" or "coming together to learn"
 - Archaeological evidence suggest that purpose-built synagogues were used as early as 300 B.C. in Egypt.
 - A Synagogue service at the time of Christ consisted of prayers, psalm-singing, blessings, Scripture reading, and sermons/commentary.
 - I would go into more detail in the notes but it would be lengthy and boring to almost everyone.
- Christ took a turn at reading a portion of Scripture and preaching/teaching from it.
- The passage is Isaiah 61:1-2, and His message is simple - "That's me!"
- The initial reaction was disbelief, that the son of the carpenter they all knew claimed such a thing as this.
- Christ's response to point at their unbelief, and that the signs they sought may never come
- The crowd is angered by His claim in vs. 21, but also that He refused to entertain their desires
- They tried to kill Christ on grounds of blasphemy by forcing Him off a local cliff, but Christ's time had not yet come.

28. Moves to Capernaum - Matthew 4:13-16, Luke 4:31

- Rejected by his hometown, Christ moves the base of His operations to Capernaum
- Matthew points out that this move is consistent with the prophecy in Isaiah 9:1

29. Calls Disciples - Matthew 4:17-22, Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11

- Christ begins to call out certain individuals, who will soon number twelve, to train under and assist Him.
- It was not uncommon in Jewish culture for a rabbi to take disciples under him.
- Among the first are four fishermen - Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
- Luke adds that Peter's call was in conjunction with a miraculous catch of fish

Ministry in Galilee

Introduction

- The events we cover today will out the remaining part of a full year since Christ's last visit to Jerusalem for the Passover.
- This year of ministry is sometimes called the Year of Obscurity. Christ's popularity is growing but His ministry and influence are only to grow in the second year of His ministry

30. Healing Demoniac in Synagogue - Mark 1:21-28, Luke 4:31-37

- Note how people were amazed at Christ's preaching and the authority/power behind it
 - Jewish rabbis would often rely on the authority of past rabbis and not their own
- Here we have Christ's first recorded encounter with demonic forces
- Note that the demon knew who Christ was and what He could do (James 2:9)

31. Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law - Matthew 3:14-17, Mark 1:29-34, Luke 4:38-41

- We sometimes forget that the disciples had lives themselves, and here we get a slight glimpse into Peter's personal life.
- Christ heals the mother-in-law with no fanfare and she immediately and completely recovered.
- Word travels fast and by sundown many were coming seeking His help.
- Matthew points to fulfilled prophecy in Isaiah 53:4.
- Note that Christ does not allow the demons to identify Him before the people. He did not want people to put their faith in Him on the basis of the word of a demon.

32. Ministry in Galilee - Matthew 4:23-25, Mark 1:35-39, Luke 4:42-44

- After a brief respite Christ is back to work traveling throughout Galilee.
- This preaching tour brings further fame to Christ and people are coming in from throughout the region to seek Him.

33. Heals Leper - Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-16

- Some leprosy facts:
 - Caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*.
 - It can take years for symptoms to appear after exposure
 - Symptoms are skin lesions with decreased sensitivity, muscle weakness, and numbness in extremities.
 - If untreated can lead to disfigurement, muscle weakness, nerve damage, sensory loss, and possible loss of hands or feet due to complications.
 - In ancient times and some cases even today lepers are shunned and live out their lives in leper colonies apart from civilization.
 - See Leviticus 13:44-46 and Numbers 5:2-3
- Jesus touched the leper, which many would not do in fear of contracting the disease.
- See Leviticus 14:1-32 for details on the ceremonies involving a healed leper.
- Mark and Luke both note that this event increased Christ's popularity. The throngs of people seeking Him forced Him to withdraw from public to a large extent.

34. Heals Paralytic - Matthew 9:2-8, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26

- Christ returns to His new home in Capernaum and the people flock to Him seeking miracles and to hear His preaching.
- Christ is in a house preaching and healing, the crowd is overflowing so that desperate measures must be taken to see Him.
- Smith's Bible Dictionary states: "The roofs are commonly but not always flat, and are usually formed of plaster of mud and straw laid upon boughs or rafters; and upon the flat roofs, tents or "booths" of boughs or rushes are often raised to be used as sleeping-places in summer."
- Tearing a hole in the roof as here was not quite as destructive as it would be today with the type of roof described above. Much maintenance was required for roofs and repairs were common.
- This appears also to be the first encounter with the Pharisees who had come to examine Christ.
- Christ asserts His deity in forgiving the man's sins. He proves His deity by healing the man.

35. The Call of Matthew - Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:13-14, Luke 5:27-28

- Matthew/Levi was a tax collector for Rome, probably collecting tariffs on trade goods
- He was thus probably wealthy due to the corrupt tax system at the time and extremely unpopular amongst his own people.

Beginning the Second Year

Introduction

- We begin now into the second full year of Christ's ministry, called by some the Year of Public Favor
- During this year Christ is becoming more well known and popular amongst the people. There is also a rise in opposition.

36. The Pool of Bethesda - John 5:1-47

- The exact feast mentioned in vs. 1 is debated. We are going to assume like some scholars that it the Passover, marking a full year in Christ's ministry since Lesson 7.
- The Pool of Bethesda (means "house of mercy")
 - Located just outside the walls of Jerusalem north of the Temple and Antonia Fortress.
 - Actually two pools, surrounded and separated by porches. The upper pool acted as a reservoir to replenish the lower.
 - Would be used as a Jewish ritual bath, or *mikveh*. Broad steps were located in the lower pool for people to walk in and immerse themselves.
- The last part of verse 3 and all of verse 4 are considered by some modern scholars to not be part of the original text, but added at a later date as clarification by some anonymous scribe. I REJECT this notion. It is a very complicated debate that we do not have time to get into.
- Vs. 9-10 - Note how nearsighted the Jews are in the observance of their traditions that they overlook that a man has been miraculously healed.
- A few verses on the the Sabbath and its regulation: Genesis 2:2-3, Leviticus 23:1-3, Leviticus 23:3,12, Exodus 34:21, Jeremiah 17:21, Exodus 20:8-10, Deuteronomy 5:12, Numbers 15:32-36
- The Jews are further infuriated when Christ claims higher authority and equality with God in vs. 16-18.
- Christ goes into further detail of the relation of the Son to the Father, plus validation for His claim of deity in vs. 19-47

37. Eating Corn on the Sabbath - Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-5

- We are now back in Galilee, probably Capernaum.
- While walking along a path in a corn field possibly en route to the synagogue, the hungry disciples pick corn, husk it, and eat.
- The problem - it was on the Sabbath day. It was seen as "labor" and prohibited by the Pharisees and their traditions but not by the Scriptures. It was a man-made ordinance they violated.
- Christ defends them by pointed to others: David (1 Samuel 21:1-7) who ate the shewbread that was reserved for the priests, and the priests themselves who labored on the Sabbath day in their ministering of the day.
- He then claims authority and superiority over the institution of the Sabbath.
- The case is not closed as we transition directly into the next event

38. Healing on the Sabbath - Matthew 12:9-14, Mark 3:1-6, Luke 6:6-11

- Christ enters into the Synagogue for the Sabbath service. While teaching He calls a man with a withered hand forward and pushes the question of the Sabbath back at the Pharisees.
- He points out their own hypocrisy concerning the Sabbath before healing the man.
- The Pharisees are so enraged that they begin to plot kill Christ.

39. Followed by Multitudes - Matthew 12:15-21, Mark 3:7-12,

- In contrast to the growing opposition seen in the previous events, we now focus on the growing popularity of Christ among the common people.
- Matthew points to the fulfillment of Isaiah 42:1-3

40. Choosing the Twelve - Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-19

- Although Christ already had followers and disciples, it is at this point that He selects twelve for special training and service.
- They are (so you can pass the test... just kidding):
 - Simon Peter
 - Andrew
 - James son of Zebedee
 - John son of Zebedee
 - Philip
 - Bartholomew
 - Thomas
 - Matthew, or Levi, the Publican
 - James son of Alphaeus, called James the Less
 - Lebbaeus surnamed Thaddaeus, also called Judas or Jude
 - Simon the Canaanite, also called Simon Zelotes (the Zealot)
 - Judas Iscariot
- These men are about to go through the greatest education program under the greatest Teacher to be entrusted with most important mission the world has known.

The Sermon on the Mount

Introduction

- Christ give his lengthiest public discourse on a hillside near Capernaum.
- Here is the clearest showing of the doctrine that Christ taught
- I feel that to understand Christ and His ministry we need to spend some time here.

41. The Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 5:1-8:1, Luke 6:20-49

- Note - we will focus our study on Matthew's account which is much longer.
- Overview
 - An overall theme of the sermon is that there is a new and higher standard, one that looks on the inside rather than the outside, or at the motive of the heart rather than the action of the hand.
 - The sermon focuses on the Law, and man's inability to keep it. Even if kept outwardly, the Law can still be broken in the heart.
 - This is the King of Kings delivering His Royal Law to those that would be His subjects.
 - The sermon is directed first toward the disciples and indirectly toward the multitudes
 - Note the authority Christ claims. Examples - 5:22, 7:24-27
- THE SERMON
 - THE NEW STANDARD TOWARD SELF - 5:3-16
 - The Inward Character of a Believer - The Beatitudes - 5:3-12
 - "Blessed" also means "happy"
 - Many of these are paradoxes to human reasoning, but display truth from God's perspective.
 - The Outward Character of a Believer - 5:13-16
 - The inward power of a Believer should not be hidden
 - A Believer is to be a witness in their life of the God they serve.
 - THE NEW STANDARD TOWARD THE LAW - 5:17-48
 - Christ is the fulfillment of the Law - 5:17-18
 - Christ fulfilled every demand impossible for man to keep
 - Christ was the subject that the Law foreshadowed
 - The Importance of the Law - 5:19-20
 - The standards of the Law regarding morality still stand as God's test.
 - To pass this test takes more than *obeying* the Law: it shows the futility of our own righteousness.
 - Examples of the New Standard applied inwardly - 5:21-5:48
 - #1 - Murder and Anger - 5:21-26
 - vs. 22 - "Raca" means "worthless", the council is the Sanhedrin.
 - #2 - Adultery and Lust - 5:27-30
 - #3 - Divorce - 5:31-32
 - Christ revisits this subject in Matthew 19:1-12
 - #4 - Swearing Oaths - 5:33-5:37
 - vs. 33 - "for swear" means to commit perjury
 - #5 - Retaliation/Revenge - 5:38-42
 - This passage is not teaching pacifism or condemning self-defense, rather it teaching that we should take troubles in stride and not seek vengeance ourselves. See Romans 12:19.
 - #6 - Love vs. Hate - 5:43-47
 - #7 - The Ultimate Standard is God Himself - 5:48

- THE NEW STANDARD TOWARD GOD - 6:1-34
 - Examples of the New Standard applied outwardly - 6:1-18
 - #1 - Alms - 6:2-4
 - Alms is charitable giving
 - #2 - Prayer - 6:5-15
 - The Lord's Prayer is found here in 6:9-13, also in Luke 11:1-4.
 - #3 - Fasting - 6:16-18
 - Examples of the New Standard's Priorities - 6:19-24
 - #1 - Investing on Earth vs. Investing in Eternity - 6:19-21
 - #2 - Evil Eye vs. Holy Eye - 6:22-23
 - #3 - Serving God vs. Serving Money - 6:24
 - #4 - Worry vs. Trust - 6:25-34
- THE NEW STANDARD TOWARD OTHERS - 7:1-12
 - To Judge or Not to Judge? - 7:1-5
 - This is not teaching us to not judge in the sense of forming opinions, but is teaching us not to be rash or unjust in our judgment and avoid condemnation.
 - Compare Matthew 7:1 to Luke 6:37 to get a better picture of the teaching
 - The Need for Discernment - 7:6-11
 - Note the source and authority is GOD acting through our prayers!
 - One of our most earnest prayers should be for Godly wisdom.
 - The Golden Rule - 7:12
- THE CRISIS OF THE NEW STANDARD - 7:13-29
 - The decision must be made: will you follow Christ and His teaching?
 - Illustrated by Two Gates - 7:13-14
 - False Prophets and Believers - 7:15-23
 - Note - If we're not supposed to judge (according to some people), how are we supposed to spot these false prophets? Christ tells us to judge them by their fruits.
 - Illustrated by Two Buildings - 7:24-27
- THE PEOPLE'S REACTION - 7:28-8:1

Further Ministry in Galilee

Introduction

- Christ continues ministering around Galilee after the Sermon on the Mount.

42. Heals Centurion's Servant - Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10

- The Centurion would be a Gentile by race, but was a Jewish proselyte
- Luke adds further character references for the centurion, stating that Jewish elders came on his behalf to beseech Christ for help.
- We see a glimpse of his heart in his tender care for his ill servant.
- Remains the synagogue he helped finance have been found.
- Note that Christ is not moved by the man's testimony, but by his faith and humility.

43. Raises Widow's Son - Luke 7:11-17

- Nain is a village about 20 miles southwest of Capernaum
- Jews buried their dead outside of their cities. A funeral procession with much mourning was customary as they went to bury the dead.
- According to Jewish traditions described in some commentaries, the manner here of carrying the body would perhaps note that the boy is 1-3 years old.
- Note the widow's condition: no husband, no heir, no hope.
- Adam Clarke - "Wherever Jesus goes, He meets death or misery; and wherever He comes, He dispenses life and salvation."
- This is the first of three people that were raised back to life by Christ (also Jairus' daughter and Lazarus).

44. John the Baptist Sends Disciples - Matthew 11:2-19, Luke 7:18-35

- John the Baptist is in prison (Matthew 14:3-4), probably months away from his execution
- Two theories on why John did this:
 - He had doubts in his present trouble about Christ or His mission
 - He wanted to point his remaining disciples to Christ
- Christ then tells the multitudes:
 - John the Baptist was instrumental in God's plan, seen in Malachi 3:1, Isaiah 40:3
 - John was the last and greatest of the Prophets
 - They rejected John and they reject Christ also - note Luke 7:29-30

45. Upbraids Cities - Matthew 11:20-30

- "Upbraid" means to scold or find fault against
- Much as Christ as just described those who rejected both John and Himself (see above), we here sense the frustration at the hard hearts of men that refuse to heed the gospel.
- The places where Christ had labored most (Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum named here) are said to be worse than pagans (Tyre and Sidon) and reprobates (Sodom).

46. Anointed by Woman - Luke 7:36-50

- A Pharisee named Simon (see vs. 40) has invited Christ to a dinner. Knowing the character of the Pharisees we can probably assume a diabolical motive.
- In the midst of those who professed true religion came one fallen woman who showed them what true religion was really about.
- Christ drives the message home with a short parable (vs. 41-43).
- What saved her? FAITH! (vs. 50)

Parables of the Kingdom

Introduction

- Christ continues ministering around Galilee
- We are now between 1/4 and 1/3 of the way through our series

47. Ministry in Galilee - Luke 8:1-3

- Christ continues preaching and ministering throughout Galilee with the disciples
- We have also a glimpse into the larger circle of followers with the inclusion of three women: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna.

48. Disciples vs. Family - Matthew 12:46-50, Mark 3:31-35, Luke 8:19-21

- While Christ is teaching in Capernaum, it appears that Mary and a contingent of family members probably from Nazareth pay a visit.
- At least four half-brothers of Christ are named in Matthew 13:55
- The lesson here is not that family ties are not important - compare to Exodus 20:12
- The lesson is that there are stronger ties and greater responsibilities than family.
- Blood ties are strong, but not compared to those bound together in Christ's blood!

49. Parable of the Sower - Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-25, Luke 8:4-18

- For a second time Christ teaches from a boat to those on the shore - Luke 5:3
- NOTES ON PARABLES
 - Christ gave around 40 parables
 - "earthly story with a heavenly meaning"
 - "a placing beside, a comparison, a similitude, an illustration of one subject by another"
 - B.H. Carroll gives the following reasons for using parables:
 - To get the attention of the people
 - To reveal conduct and character without being too direct
 - To enforce truth by way of illustration
 - To stimulate inquiry
 - To fasten truth to the mind and aid the memory
- This is the first of the Parables of the Kingdom
- Christ gives the parable, and the disciples do not understand
- Christ explains His use of parables in Matthew 13:14-15, pointing to fulfillment of Isaiah 6:9-10
- Christ explains the parable
- The truth illustrated in this parable involves the preaching of the Gospel. Some men receive it, some do not. Some of those who receive it grow greatly in grace, some do not.

50. Parable of Tares - Matthew 13:24-30,36-43; Mark 4:26-29

- Once again the disciples hear the parable and do not understand it, kind of like people who listen to me teach.
- The truth illustrated in this parable involves not all who claim to be God's children are. Though we live together now, our futures are vastly different.

51. Parable of the Mustard Seed - Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32

- The truth illustrated in this parable involves the growth of Christ's kingdom. From humble origins it grows mighty and vast.

52. Parable of Leaven - Matthew 13:33-35

- Another fulfilled prophecy is pointed out in Matthew 13:35 - Psalm 78:2
- This parable is strange in that leaven is usually a picture of corruption or sin (Exodus 12:8,15-20)
- The three measures of meal could refer to a meat offering (Leviticus 14:10)
- The truth probably illustrated in this parable involves the eventual corruption of the original message of the Gospel.
- Once this parable is finished Christ goes into a house and teaches.

53. Parable of the Hidden Treasure - Matthew 13:44

- Finding a hoard of valuables would have been rare but not unknown at the time.
- The truth illustrated in this parable involves Christ giving His life for the world to redeem those who will trust in Him.

54. Parable of the Pearl of Great Price - Matthew 13:45-46

- The truth illustrated in this parable shows Christ giving His all for the one that above all else in His eyes - the Believers.

55. Parable of Drag Net - Matthew 13:47-50

- The truth illustrated in this parable involves the cohabitation of the world by saints and sinners. Their fates are far different.

56. Parable of Householder - Matthew 13:51-52

- The truth illustrated in this parable involves the responsibility of those that preach the Gospel. In presenting the treasures of God we are to be careful in showing the entire collection.

Growing Controversy

Introduction

- In this series of events we begin to see the growing opposition to Christ even as He boldly shows Who He is.

57. Christ Calms the Sea - Matthew 8:18-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25

- Matthew notes in 8:19-22 that before leaving Christ tests the commitment of two would-be disciples
- Pressed by the multitude Christ leaves for the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Some seem to have followed Him in other boats (Mark 4:36)
- Christ is only woke by the disciples when all hope is lost in the storm
- The people marvel at His power over the storm

58. The Maniac of Gadara - Matthew 8:28-9:1, Mark 5:1-21, Luke 8:26-40

- Gadara
 - Gadara was a predominately Gentile (Roman/Greek) town southeast of the Sea of Galilee and also part of the Decapolis
 - The story, history, and archaeology point to this being a very much Roman town
- Swine
 - Were considered unclean by the Jews (Leviticus 11:7-8, Deuteronomy 14:8)
 - Were a dietary staple and common sacrifice among the Romans
- Matthew notes that two demon possessed men were healed by Christ, while Mark and Luke only speak of one. This is not an error, just that Mark and Luke chose to focus only on the one of the two.
- The exact number of demons involved is difficult to estimate. A Roman legion was around 6,000 soldiers but could double with reinforcements and auxiliaries. Mark notes that 2,000 swine perished.
- "The entrance of the demons into the swine gave outward evidence that the powers of darkness were driven forth" - Trench.
- The townspeople would rather have the swine than the redeemed demoniac.
- The healed demoniac tells of Christ throughout the Gentile cities of the Decapolis

59. Matthew's Feast - Matthew 9:10-13, Mark 2:15-17, Luke 5:29-32

- If I had read far enough ahead in this study I would have adjusted this event MUCH earlier, probably making it event #36 just following Matthew's call. I apologize that my foundational source disagreed with me and I did not catch it. You just can't trust anyone any more...
- The point of contention is that Christ willingly associates with sinners while the Pharisees avoided them
- Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost - Luke 19:10

60. Questioned by John's Disciples - Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22, Luke 5:33-39

- It's funny that these guys claimed to follow John the Baptist but didn't listen to him when he pointed them to the Messiah.
- Their question is more of a self-righteous rebuke
- Albert Barnes states that the three illustrations Christ used in reply show "we should observe a fitness and propriety in things."
- The final two point to an incompatibility between Christ and the Pharisees

Further Ministry in Galilee

Introduction

- Christ continues His ministry in Galilee
- Christ performs noteworthy and exceptional miracles, but still there are those that refuse to believe on Him.

61. Raises Jairus' Daughter from the Dead- Matthew 9:18-19,23-26; Mark 5:22-24,35-43; Luke 8:41-42,49-56

- Immediately follows #60.
- Jairus leaves his daughter at the point of death to seek out Christ for help. His request seems to indicate that he believed his quest may have been too late.
- En route, Christ is thronged and #62 takes place.
- Upon arriving it appears that Christ was too late, but God always arrives on time.
- Christ charges that none should tell (Luke 8:56), and they seem to have ignored Him (Matthew 9:26)
- This is the second of three people Christ raised from the dead.

62. Heals Woman With Issue of Blood - Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-34, Luke 8:43-48

- Note that for 12 years this woman has suffered in both her malady and her treatments
- "The hem of his garment" probably refers to the "fringes" mentioned in Numbers 15:38
- Many people touched Christ that day, but only one acted in faith.

63. Heals Two Blind Men - Matthew 9:27-31

- Notice here and in many other cases that healing is not dependent on God's power, but on the faith of the one seeking it.
- Once again, no one listens to Him about the whole "don't tell anyone" thing.

64. Casts out a Devil - Matthew 9:32-34

- Reminder: "dumb" means that not being able to talk
- The Pharisees cannot even admit that Christ is doing good, but have to force the logic that He is doing good through evil means.

65. Rejected at Nazareth... Again - Matthew 13:54-58, Mark 6:1-6

- There is some debate whether or not this is the same event as we have as #27 in Luke 4:16-31. Some of the details don't quite match and it appears this could be two separate events.
- Once again Christ preaches in the synagogue in Nazareth and once again the people refuse to believe in Him.

The Height of Christ's Popularity

Introduction

- Christ continues His ministry in Galilee
- We near the end of the "Year of Popularity"

66. Sending the Twelve to Preach - Matthew 10:1-11:1, Mark 6:6-13, Luke 9:1-6

- Christ sends out the Twelve to preach throughout Galilee. This seem to me to be a very public offer of Christ to the Jews to be their Messiah.
- The disciples go forth as the Messiah's emissaries, empowered to do miracles.
- Christ's instructions spend a lot of time on fact that many will reject Him and the dangers they will face

67. The Death of John the Baptist - Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-16,21-29; Luke 9:7-9

- This takes place in the hilltop fortress at Machaerus east of the Dead Sea.
- For more information on Herod Antipas, see Event #23 in Lesson #7
- The dancer is Salome, daughter of Herodias by her previous marriage
- Herod's hesitancy to have John killed could be because:
 - He had some morality about him - I doubt it.
 - He feared a political backlash from the people who still admired John
 - He realized he had been tricked by his wife and step-daughter.
- Charger - a serving plate
- Note the love of John's disciples that they care for the body of their friend
- Note also that they finally turn to Christ after John is gone.

68. Feeding of the 5,000 - Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-15

- This short time before the third passover of Christ's ministry - John 6:4
- We also see that this coincides with the return of the Twelve from their preaching tour (Mark 6:30) and Christ receiving the news of John the Baptist's death (Matthew 14:13)
- Takes place around Bethsaida (Luke 9:10) on the northeastern shore of Sea of Galilee
- Losing the much loved John the Baptist left the people confused, or as Mark puts it: "as sheep not having a shepherd" (Mark 6:34)
- 1 Lunch Box + Christ's Blessing = 5,000 People Fed + 12 Baskets of Leftovers
- The end result is that Christ must flee before the people force Him to become king - John 6:15
 - I believe this is the high water mark of Christ's popularity. From this point Christ faces rejection and opposition.

69. Walking on Water - Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:16-21

- Christ sends the disciples ahead to Capernaum via their boat. They probably expected Christ to come via another boat or to walk
- 25-30 furlongs = 3-4 miles, which means they were almost back to Capernaum
- Fourth watch = between 3 and 6 a.m.
- Notice that the disciples and Peter were both close to their destinations when they had problems. The disciples were at Capernaum (John 6:21) and Peter was close enough to Christ that Christ could catch his fall (Matthew 14:31).

Beginning the Year of Opposition

Introduction

- We begin with events immediately after those of the previous lesson
- During this lesson we enter the third full year of Christ's ministry

70. Many Turn Away - John 6:22-7:1

- The multitudes find Christ back in Capernaum and question him in the synagogue
- It may be a bit lengthy, but here is an outline:
 - The First Exchange – vs. 22-27
 - The people have sought Christ after He fed them – vs. 23-25
 - Christ points to their motives and points them toward the spiritual – vs. 26-27
 - The Second Exchange – vs. 28-29
 - The people inquire about what work is required of them – vs. 28
 - Christ says the work required is obeying the Gospel – vs. 29
 - The Third Exchange – vs. 30-33
 - The people ask for a sign, and if the food was it – vs. 30-31
 - Christ points them to the spiritual bread and not the carnal – vs. 32-33
 - The Fourth Exchange – vs. 34-40
 - The people ask for more bread (compare to John 4:15 – vs. 34)
 - Jesus is the bread of life – vs. 35
 - The Saved and the Lost – vs. 36-40
 - The Fifth Exchange – vs. 41-51
 - The Jews are angry that He claimed to be heaven sent – vs. 41-42
 - The relationship of the Father and Christ – vs. 43-46
 - Christ is salvation, illustrated as bread and manna – vs. 47-51
 - The Sixth Exchange – vs. 52-58
 - The Jews aren't thinking spiritually – vs. 52
 - Christ, speaking figuratively, emphasis the need of Him in salvation – vs. 53-57
 - Christ combines the illustrations – bread and Himself – vs. 58
 - The Seventh Exchange – vs. 60-66
 - Now His followers have issues – vs. 60
 - Christ points them to the spiritual – vs. 61-63
 - Foreshadowing Judas – vs. 64-65
 - Many of disciples forsake Him – vs. 66
 - The Eighth Exchange – vs. 67-71
 - Jesus now puts a question to His inner circle – vs. 67
 - Peter speaks for the group, confirming their faith in Christ – vs. 68-69
 - Christ once again foreshadows His betrayal by Judas – vs. 70-71

71. Misc. Ministry - Matthew 14:34-36, Mark 6:53-56

- Christ returns to the area around Capernaum and continues to teach and heal
- Both Matthew and Mark note that people are now imitating the woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment (Event #62 in Lesson #16)
- These events would occur around Passover (see Event #68)

72. Eating With Unwashed Hands - Matthew 15:1-20, Mark 7:1-23

- Note that these critics have travelled all the way from Jerusalem to Galilee to have their say.
- The washing of hands referred to here is not a matter of cleanliness, but a ceremonial tradition.
- The accusation is not that Christ and the disciples had broken a Scriptural commandment because they had not. They were guilty of not following the extra-biblical traditions that the Pharisees based so much of their beliefs on.
- Christ responds that the Pharisees may be keeping their traditions but they are not following the commands of God
- The Pharisees made a “loop hole” in regards to the command to care for one’s parents. A person could claim that their wealth had been set aside as a “gift” for God and thus could not be used to care for their family.
- “Corban” in Mark 7:11 means that something has been given or devoted to God.
- The quoted passage in Matthew 15:7-9 and Mark 7:6-7 is from Isaiah 29:13
- Christ’s message to the multitudes witnessing this exchange is that the sinful nature of fallen man is what defiles a person, and not the things around us.
- This concept astounds the disciples and Christ has to further explain it in private

Criss-Crossing the Sea of Galilee

Introduction

- Christ travels around Galilee.

73. Healing Syrophenician Woman's Daughter - Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30

- Christ departs to the far northern borders of Israel near the ancient Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon
- The woman requesting His aid is not a Jew, and thus would be looked down on by the Jews
- Christ tests her faith in part to show those around her what true faith was.
- Christ departs as this event would bring out the crowds seeking Him.

74. Heals a Deaf Man - Mark 7:31-37

- Christ seeks solitude by returning to the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee near the Decapolis, a group of ten Greek/Roman cities.
- A man is brought to Him that is deaf and has a speech impediment (tongue-tied?, see vs. 35)
- Mark gives great detail about the particular actions Christ takes in healing the man. Did Christ have to do these actions? Absolutely not. They are for the benefit of the witnesses.

75. Misc. Healings - Matthew 15:29-31

- Christ seeks solitude by returning to the hills on the northeastern shores of the Sea of Galilee
- Multitudes seek Him out and He heals many.

76. Feeding Four Thousand - Matthew 15:32-38, Mark 8:1-9

- After three days of ministry Christ has compassion on the multitudes following Him.
- Wouldn't you think the disciples would remember that Christ fed a larger crowd some months or so before? Nope.
- The situation is very similar to the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Event #68), except this time seven loaves and a few fishes are used and seven baskets full of leftovers

77. Seeking a Sign - Matthew 15:39-16:4, Mark 8:10-12

- Christ retreats now the western shore of the Sea of Galilee near the town of Magdala
- The Pharisees seek Him out to tempt Him to give them a sign of Who He was. Evidently they haven't been around for what transpired in the first four events of this lesson...
- Notice in Matthew 16:2-3 the familiar weather proverb? "Red sky at night, sailor's delight. Red sky in morning, sailor take warning."
- Matthew has Christ telling them that the only sign they will receive is the sign of Jonas - see Matthew 12:40.

78. The Leaven of the Pharisees - Matthew 16:5-12, Mark 8:13-21

- As they sail from Magdala to Bethsaida Christ warns the disciples about the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but the disciples think they are in trouble for not having provisions.
- Leaven in the Bible pictures sin. Just a little dash of leaven (yeast) to a dough makes a huge difference in baking. Just a little wrong in the teachings of the Pharisees made a huge difference.

Foreshadows

Introduction

- In the midst of ministry we see foreshadows of the suffering and victory to come.

79. Heals Blind Man - Mark 8:22-26

- Christ takes the blind man outside of Bethsaida. Why? See Matthew 11:21.
- To me this is most peculiar of all of Christ's miracles. Christ seems to have not healed the man completely at first. Why not heal the man wholly the first time?
- My personal opinion is that that Christ was testing the man's faith. Would he be satisfied with partial sight? Would he keep seeking until he had the full answer?

80. Peter's Confession - Matthew 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30, Luke 9:18-21

- Caesarea Philippi was a city about 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee. At the time it was the center for Philip the Tetrarch's government.
- Peter gives the best answer to the most important question
- Too much emphasis has been placed on Christ's message to Peter by many people (Catholics...). Christ is describing the establishment of the church through the work of the Apostles in the Book of Acts.
- The command to not tell is a command to let God's work progress in God's time.

81. Foretells Suffering - Matthew 16:21-28, Mark 8:31-9:1, Luke 9:22-27

- Christ begins to prepare His followers... His friends... for the events to come in less than one year.
- Peter is rebuked for trying to hinder the ultimate purpose of Christ's mission.

82. The Transfiguration - Matthew 17:1-13, Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36

- Christ takes the inner circle of disciples to a mountain apart from the rest to witness Christ in His glory.
- Note the living example of the Bible - the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) bearing witness of Christ and his mission.
- J. Vernon McGee believes that we see Christ's humanity transfigured much like our own bodies will be changed (I Corinthians 15:51).
- Peter once again lets his zeal get ahead of his head.
- God's presence is often pictured as a cloud (Exodus 33:9, Psalm 97:2, Leviticus 16:2, Deuteronomy 4:11, I Kings 8:10-12)
- Peter writes of these events in II Peter 1:16-18.

83. Heals Demon Possessed Son - Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-29, Luke 9:37-43

- Note the desperation: the severe case of the child, the care of the parent, the impotence of the disciples.
- Christ cites, again, the lack of faith of the disciples.

84. Foretells His Death - Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:30-32, Luke 9:44-45

- Christ is preparing His followers for what is to come, not so they can prevent it but rather that they can fully understand it.

Beginning toward Jerusalem

Introduction

- Christ and his disciples go toward Jerusalem to worship for the Feast of Tabernacles.
- This takes place in late summer, about seven months before the crucifixion
- We begin in Capernaum before departing toward Jerusalem for perhaps the last time.

85. Paying the Temple Tax - Matthew 17:24-27

- The tribute mentioned here is the Jewish Temple Tax. It was a half-shekel of silver paid each year by every Jewish man. See Exodus 30:13.
- Christ's response is essentially that He, as Lord over the Temple, could well be exempt from the tax. Yet, for the sake of example, Christ submits to the tax.
- The fish mentioned here is believed to be a type of Tilapia called *musht*. They carry their young in their mouths and have been known to carry small pebbles and even bottle caps in their mouths also. Many today call these fish "St. Peter's fish".
- The coin caught was a full shekel. This would be enough to pay for both Peter and Christ.

86. Teaching the Disciples - Matthew 18:1-35, Mark 9:33-50, Luke 9:46-50

- Here we will group a series of lessons taught by Christ to His disciples
 - Who's the Greatest? - Matthew 18:1-4, Mark 9:33-37, Luke 9:46-48
 - The disciples squabble over who will be the greatest in the future kingdom
 - Christ stresses that humility is the key.
 - Who's On Our Side? - Mark 9:38-41, Luke 9:49-50
 - John wants Christ to rebuke others working in His name
 - Warning against Offending - Matthew 18:5-10, Mark 9:42-50
 - "offend" here means to cause to stumble or sin
 - Parable of the Lost Sheep - Matthew 18:11-14
 - This is Christ's purpose and the value of even the little one.
 - Pattern for Conduct - Matthew 18:15-20
 - Forgiveness - Matthew 18:21-22
 - It's not about the number of times you forgive, but how fully you forgive.
 - Parable of - Matthew 18:23-35
 - Used to drive home the point above
 - 10,000 talents of silver (at \$20 an ounce) is about \$240,000,000
 - 100 pence (denarii) figured the same is about \$220
 - We have been forgiven so much by God, we should so forgive others.

87. Leaving for Jerusalem - Luke 9:51-56, John 7:2-9

- Luke's account has Christ beginning His journey by not being welcomed at His first stop.
- John's account has Christ's family trying to get Him to go the upcoming Feast, proclaim Himself the Messiah, and take power.
- Christ refuses to go with them and departs later.
- The secrecy mentioned in John 7:10 is not talking about the journey but the arrival.

88. Testing Discipleship - Luke 9:57-62

- The first has his impetuous zeal rebuked by the cold, hard truth
- The second wishes to begin following at some later date.
 - "go and bury my father" does not mean the dad is dead at all
- The third would only commit partially, wanting to hold to his old life a little longer.

At The Feast of Tabernacles

Introduction

- Christ arrives in Jerusalem after traveling through Samaria.
- Christ faces traps and opposition as He publicly teaches at the Temple.

89. The Seventy Sent into Samaria - Luke 10:1-24

- Similar to Event #66 - Sending the Twelve (Matthew 10:1-11:1, Mark 6:6-13, Luke 9:1-6)
- These are 70 additional followers of Christ and do not seem to include the Twelve
- Outline
 - The Commission - vs. 2-11
 - Upbraiding Cities - vs. 12-16
 - The Seventy Return - vs. 17-20
 - Christ's Prayer - vs. 21-22
 - Christ's Comment - vs. 23-24

90. At the Feast of Tabernacles - John 7:10-53

- Christ arrives at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (Hebrew: *Sukkot*)
 - One of the three Pilgrimage Festivals (with Passover and Pentecost)
 - Exodus 23:16, 34:22; Leviticus 23:34-43; Numbers 29:12-40; Deuteronomy 16:13-15
 - Celebrated for a week beginning on 14th of Tishrei. In 2013 from September 19-26.
 - People ate and some slept in temporary "booths" or "tabernacles" called *sukkah*.
 - Recited blessings each day over the *lulav* (bundle of the "Four Species" mentioned in Leviticus 23:4, traditionally a citron fruit, a date palm frond, a myrtle branch, and a willow branch)



- Image source: http://free-bitsela.com/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=3074
- Two other ceremonies that will prove important shortly:
 - The High Priest poured a golden pitcher of water from the Pool of Siloam and poured it into a silver basin before the altar. The people would wave their *lulavot* and sing Psalm 118:25-26.
 - Each night four large menorahs were lit and priests performed "torch dances" throughout the night.
- The Jews were anxiously anticipating Christ's arrival and He appears to have been quite the topic of conversation.

- Christ taught publicly in the Temple and interacted with the people.
 - First they asked how He could know so much without training (vs. 15)
 - Christ responds that He is doing the will of God that sent Him.
 - Second, some balk at his claim that some want Him dead (vs. 20)
 - Christ says it stems from Event #38 (healing a man on the Sabbath) and again points their own hypocrisy.
 - Third, some are confused about if Christ could be Messiah (vs. 25-27)
 - Christ claims origin and directive from the Father
 - Fourth, steps are taken to arrest Christ as some believe (vs. 30-32)
 - Christ cannot be touched because His time was not yet come, alludes to the fact that He will soon be gone.
 - Fifth, the people don't understand and think Christ is leaving town (vs. 35-36)
 - Sixth, in conjunction with the water-pouring ceremony Christ proclaims Himself (vs. 37-38)
 - Seventh, the mixed reaction and failure to arrest Christ (vs. 39-53)

91. Woman Taken in Adultery - John 8:1-11

- Christ's enemies set a trap for Him with a woman "taken in adultery". According to the Mosaic Law, she should have been stoned (Deuteronomy 22:22). By condemning her to death by stoning He would break Roman law which denied Jews the power of execution. By letting her go free, He would have denied the Law in favor of the crime committed.
 - On a side note... where was the man taken in adultery? He was guilty, too!
- What did Jesus write in the ground? We don't know. A curious case can be made by comparing to Jeremiah 17:13.

92. Christ vs. the Pharisees - John 8:12-59

- Christ claims to be the light of the world, perhaps while the lights still burned from the "torch dances" of the Feast just passed.
- Ten exchanges take place:
 - First, the Pharisees say Christ's witness is not enough - vs. 13-18
 - Second, the Pharisees probe about the Father - vs. 19-20
 - Third, the Jews misunderstand Christ's foretelling of His death - vs. 21-24
 - Fourth, the Jews question Who He is, many believe - vs. 25-32
 - Fifth, the Jews do not understand their need to be free from sin - vs. 33-38
 - Sixth, the Jews claim to descend from Abraham, physically and spiritually - vs. 39-41
 - Seventh, the Jews claim to follow God - vs. 42-47
 - Eighth, the Jews cast Him off with an insult - vs. 48-51
 - Ninth, the Jews accuse Him of being greater than Abraham - vs. 52-56
 - Tenth, the Jews are shocked that Abraham could know Christ - vs. 57-59
- Verse 58 is a clear claim to deity. Abraham was born almost 2,000 years before Christ so no mortal could have existed before him and be alive. Also, Christ uses the phrase "I am" evoking the name used by God in places like Exodus 3:14.

Ministry in Judea

Introduction

- Following the Feast of Tabernacles Christ ministers and teaches in Judea.

93. The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37

- The lawyer here can also be called a scribe. He is an expert in the Mosaic Law.
- The lawyer is trying to justify himself through his self righteousness. He is trying to get Christ to give His stamp of approval.
- Although well travelled, especially by priests, the Jericho-Jerusalem road was full of bandits.
- This story is designed by Christ to shock His hearers. The best of the Jews (priest and Levite) failed to offer aid while the despised Samaritan had compassion.
- “Go, and do thou likewise” - this is an impossible standard. We cannot be justified through the Law like this man was attempting to do. We need a Savior.

94. Mary and Martha - Luke 10:38-42

- This is the first mention of the Jesus’s close friends that lived in Bethany, a village about two miles from Jerusalem.
- The family, eldest to youngest, seems to be Lazarus, Martha, Mary (do not confuse her with Mary Magdalene!).
- Is it important to spend time with Christ than to be busy.

95. How to Pray - Luke 11:1-13

- Of all the things Christ could of done on earth that marveled the disciples, one of the few requests they make is to know more about how He prayed.
- The Lord’s Prayer is also found in Matthew 6:9-13, and teaching of the same vein is also found in that chapter in the Sermon on the Mount.

96. Heals Demented - Matthew 12:22-37,43-45; Mark 3:19-30; Luke 11:14-26

- Events #96-98 appear to happen at one time.
- Christ is accused of doing good not through God, but by defeating evil with a greater evil.
- Beelzebub is believed to be referring to the ancient Philistine idol mentioned in II Kings 1.
- AMERICAN HISTORY NOTE: Abraham Lincoln used a quote from Mark 3:25 in his famous “Houses Divided” Speech.
- Evil accomplishes Evil. Good accomplishes Good. To mistake Good for Evil is one of the highest forms of blasphemy.

97. Who is Blessed? - Luke 11:27-28

- Seeing the prior miracle, a woman in the crowd is overcome and exclaims a very Jewish blessing on Christ’s mother.
- Christ points out that the truly blessed are those that follow God.
- Sorry, Catholics. Mary received no special treatment here.

98. Seeking a Sign - Matthew 12:38-42, Luke 11:29-36

- Matthew gives the detail that the Pharisees press Christ for a sign proving His authority.
- Christ refuses to perform on command and rebukes them.
- The sign He will give them - the sign of Jonas: three days buried.

Preaching in Judea

Introduction

- Christ confronts the Pharisees and preaches to the multitudes in Judea

99. Denounces the Scribes and Pharisees - Luke 11:37-54

- It is unclear if the Pharisee inviting Christ for dinner is either truly interested in Him or if this is a trap.
- John Gill on vs. 38 - "...the Pharisees not only washed their hands, by immersing them up to the elbow before eating; but when they had been at market, or among any large number of people, or had reason to think they had, or feared they had touched any unclean person or thing, they immersed themselves all over in water..."
- Note that the scribe (lawyer) takes offense in vs. 45 when Christ starts talking about them.
- Six woes:
 - vs. 42 - focusing on the inconsequential and ignoring the vital
 - vs. 43 - loving the praise of men
 - vs. 44 - they secretly pollute by appearing to be safe when they are dangerous
 - vs. 46 - burden others with regulation they won't follow themselves
 - vs. 47 - inconsistently they honor those their fathers killed
 - vs. 52 - by placing emphasis on the wrong things they hinder understanding

100. Discourses in Judea - Luke 12:1-59

- The entire chapter of Luke 12 is one sermon delivered to a great crowd along with the disciples.
- Outline and notes
 - The Leaven of the Pharisees - vs. 1-12
 - Leaven is yeast. Just a little makes a big difference in baking. It is also a picture of sin in the Bible.
 - The main thrust of this passage is that God is just, sees all, and hypocrites do not win.
 - Parable of the Rich Fool (Against Covetousness) - vs. 13-34
 - Brought about by a man asking Christ to settle a dispute over an inheritance
 - Note how many times the rich man uses personal pronouns (I, me, my)
 - This passage is not telling us it is wrong to have things, but rather that it is wrong for things to have us. Verse 34 is the key to this passage: it's a matter of where I heart is focused.
 - Be Ready - vs. 35-40
 - Some commentaries see the description in vs. 35-38 of part of the Jewish wedding ceremony. I'm not so sure and am inclined to say this describes servants being ready for the return of their master from a wedding celebration.
 - Parable of the Steward - vs. 41-48
 - Peter is unsure of Christ's motive for the preceding parable.
 - The parable contrasts two stewards. The good steward rules uprightly. The evil steward usurps the lord's authority.
 - The meaning of the parable is the responsibility we have to continue in the commandments God has given us.
 - Christ the Divider of Men - vs. 49-56
 - All of history and eternity hinge on Jesus Christ.
 - Verses 54-56 are rebuking them for not recognizing things around them

Actions and Reactions

Introduction

- Christ faces more oppositions as He works and preaches in Judea.

101. Heals Blind Man on Sabbath - John 9:1-41

- This is one of the rare times in the Scripture that we get a “big picture” look at the results of Christ’s miracles.
- Note that the disciples exhibit the common, and wrong, thinking that hardships are caused by someone’s wrongdoing.
- The healing may not have been public, but the results sure were!
- The “problem” the Pharisees had with the healing - it was on the Sabbath - vs. 14
- vs. 22 - note that followers of Christ were already facing some persecution in that they were not being allowed to worship in some Synagogues
- Though the blind man lacked full understanding at first, he did fully understand what happened to him and that Christ was the source.
- vs. 34 - “cast him out” - excommunicated him.
- Think of the roller coaster this poor man was on. Healed miraculously from his blindness he is then practically cast out of society. Who is there to comfort him? Who else? Christ!

102. The Good Shepherd - John 10:1-21

- On the surface this is a very pleasant sounding story, but under the surface is very strong teaching, including:
 - Jesus is the only way to Heaven (as THE door) - vs. 7,9
 - In spite of many false voices in the world, His followers know His voice - vs. 8
 - Christ’s sacrifice - vs. 11,15,17,18
 - The character of false teachers - vs. 12-13
 - Has a relationship with His followers - vs. 14
- Christ again foretells His death and resurrection in vs. 17-18
- In context with the preceding story, Christ is attacking the Pharisees with this story

103. At the Feast of the Dedication - John 10:22-42

- Feast of the Dedication is today called Hanukkah. It celebrates the rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees in about 167 B.C. It is celebrated for eight days beginning on the 25th of Kislev. In 2013, this is celebrated from November 27 to December 5.
- Christ is ambushed by the Jews while in the Temple and once again pressured by the Jews to prove that He is the Messiah.
- vs. 25 - Christ works proved Who He was.
- vs. 28-29 illustrate the security of the believer.
- vs. 30 is another clear claim of deity by Christ and the Jews knew it in vs. 33
- vs. 34 is a little difficult to understand. It references Psalm 82:6 where God calls judges over His people “gods” (Hebrew: *elohim*). Usually this term refers to God, but in rare cases men (Exodus 7:1, “judge” in Exodus 22:8-9). As the Jews prepare to stone Christ for making himself God, He is reminding them that the scripture says their rulers are “gods”.
- Christ retreats to probably Bethabara, a site on the Jordan River north of the Dead Sea.
- Chronological Note - From the Feast of Tabernacles (Event #90) to Hanukkah is about 70 days, from Hanukkah to the Passover (and the Crucifixion) is about 130 days.

Lazarus

Introduction

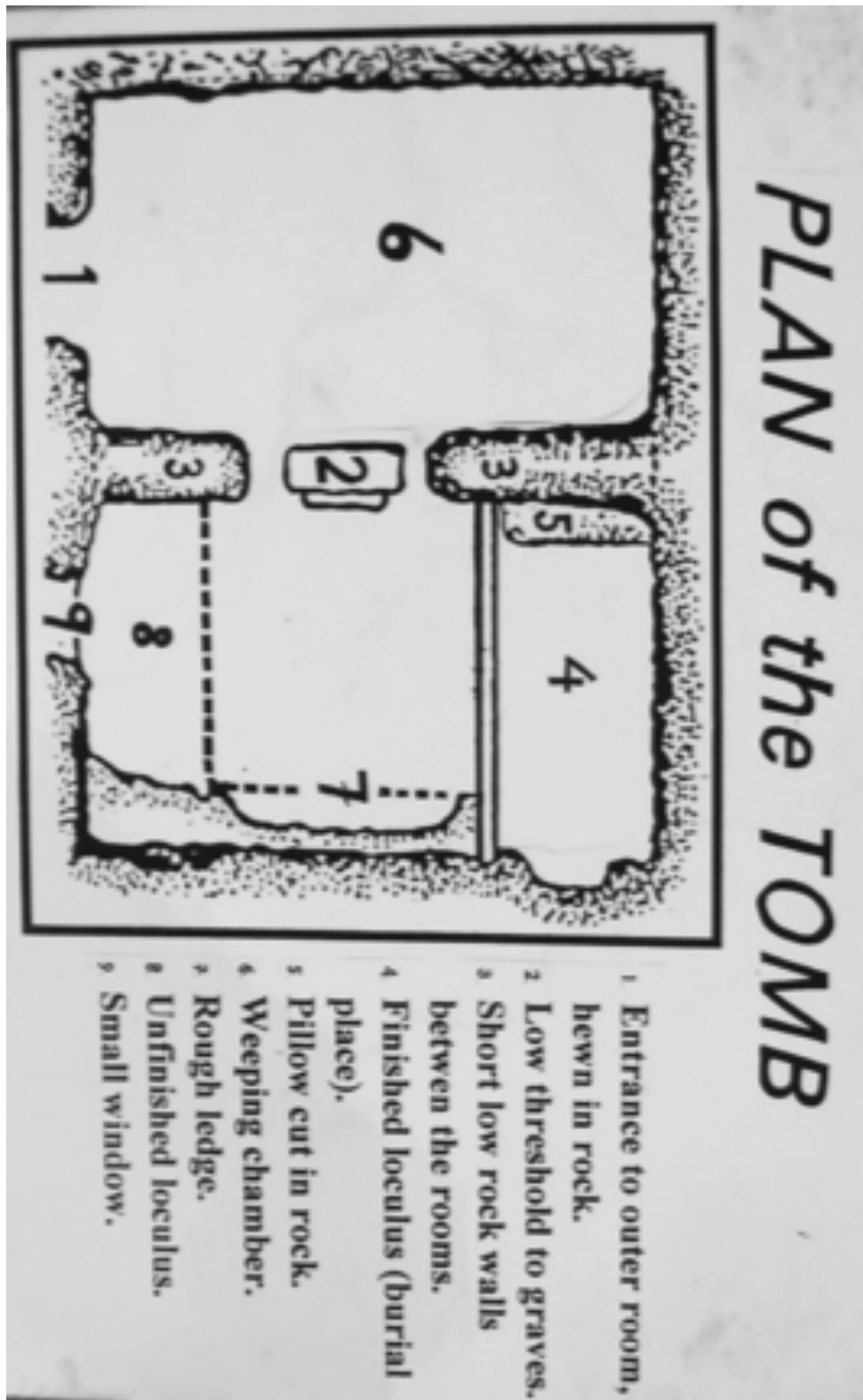
- Christ performs a mighty miracle in His enemies' backyard that they cannot dispute or discount.

104. Lazarus - John 11:1-46

- vs. 11-14 - Once again the disciples do not understand and Christ has to stop and explain
- vs. 16 - One of the two times "Doubting" Thomas will speak.
- Notes on Jewish customs regarding death and burial at the time of Christ.
 - Bodies are buried same day as death if possible
 - The middle and upper class often had their own private tombs outside of the cemeteries (this applies to Lazarus)
 - Preparing a body for burial included: washing, wrapping hands and feet, clothing the body, wrapping the body with linen and spices, and binding a napkin on the head.
 - The body was carried to its burial on a bier, with much mourning and orations on the way.
 - The body would be laid on a burial "bench" (called a *loculus* or *kokhim*). After about a year, the remains would be gathered and placed into a box called an *ossuary*. This would be placed in a niche in the tomb for permanent burial.
- Adam Clarke gives this description of Jewish mourning: "Mourning, among the Jews, lasted about thirty days: the three first days were termed days of weeping: then followed seven of lamentation. During the three days, the mourner did no servile work; and, if any one saluted him, he did not return the salutation. During the seven days, he did no servile work, except in private - lay with his bed on the floor - did not put on his sandals - did not wash nor anoint himself - had his head covered - and neither read in the law, the Mishnah, nor the Talmud. All the thirty days he continued unshaven, wore no white or new clothes, and did not sew up the rents which he had made in his garments."
- Compare vs. 33-36 to Hebrews 4:15-16.
- The raising of Lazarus is the greatest miracle Christ performed. It's impact was so great that Christ's enemies even considered having Lazarus killed - see John 12:10-11

105. Caiaphas' Scheme - John 11:47-54

- Caiaphas was High Priest from 18-36 under the Roman prefects Valerius Gratus and Pontius Pilate and was married to the daughter of previous High Priest (and still powerful) Annas.
- vs. 49-52 - It is amazing here that even an unbelieving High Priest could be used of God to prophesy about Christ's death.
- For the final four months of Christ's ministry He will shun public teaching and displays.
- Ephraim - believed by some to be the modern town of Taybeh, about kilometers northeast of Jerusalem and in between Judea and Samaria.



This is a picture of a plaque at the Garden Tomb showing the layout. I found the original image at <http://www.proverbs2525.org> and did a little editing.

The Long-Suffering Lord

Introduction

- In the final months of Christ ministry, events begin to speed as we head toward Jerusalem for a final time.

106. Except Ye Repent - Luke 13:1-5

- In spite of the various historical sources we have that covers this time, the events mentioned by Christ in vs. 2 and 4 are lost to history.
- The lesson here is twofold:
 - Not every tragedy is judgment
 - There is judgment awaiting those who do not repent of their sins

107. Parable of the Barren Fig Tree - Luke 13:6-9

- A fig tree should start bearing fruit by three years of age
- This parable is a picture of our long suffering God
- This also can be seen as a picture of Christ's ministry. We are over three years into His ministry, and the "fruit" of a repentant Israel accepting their Messiah is nowhere to be seen.

108. Heals Woman on Sabbath - Luke 13:10-17

- The description of this woman make me think that she is in almost a vegetable state.
- Problem: Christ healed her on the Sabbath and was thought "guilty" of breaking the Sabbath rest.
- This isn't the first time! See Event #36 (John 5:1-47), Event #38 (Matthew 12:9-14, Mark 3:1-6, Luke 6:6-11), and Event #101 (John 9)
- vs. 13 - note who she glorified: God! He deserves the praise when He does the work!

109. Parable of the Mustard Seed - Luke 13:18-19

- Christ repeats a parable He has told before, see Event #51 (Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32)
- J. Vernon McGee - "The 'birds' are the key of this parable. They represent the Devil who is active in Christendom and in many so-called churches."
- I think there is a slightly different emphasis in the two tellings of this parable. The first emphasizes the growth of the Kingdom of God, while this time the evil hiding in the Kingdom is emphasized.

110. Parable of the Leaven - Luke 13:20-21

- Once again, Christ repeats a parable, see Event #52 (Matthew 13:33-35)
- Leaven is usually a picture of corruption or sin (Exodus 12:8,15-20)
- Once again the emphasis of the parable is the growth of evil inside the Kingdom of God, exemplified in context by those that protested the healing of the woman in Event #17.

111. Entering the Kingdom - Luke 13:22-30

- Christ has been ministering around the Jordan River and begins to work His way to Jerusalem.
- The question asked in vs. 23 is one that bothers me also: why wouldn't someone love Christ?!?!?

- There is an eternal division of men (saved vs. unsaved). There is a deadline for every man to make their choice as to which side they will be on. There are only two options for eternity depending on which side you belong.

112. Threatened En Route to Jerusalem - Luke 13:31-35

- This is not a friendly warning: it is a threat. The Pharisees want to keep Christ away.
- There Herod mentioned here is Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great and murderer of John the Baptist. See Event #23 for more info on him.
- It is curious to me that Herod is said to want to kill Christ here but seems somewhat pleased to see Him (at least for entertainment purposes) in Luke 23:8.
- vs. 32 - points to the death and resurrection
- vs. 33 - points to the crucifixion and rejection at Jerusalem
- vs. 34 - shows God's long-suffering mercy
- vs. 35 - points to the Second Coming

A Study in Contrasts

Introduction

- Christ dines with a Pharisee and tries to teach them important lessons
- Christ then explains to the multitudes what true discipleship is

113. Heals a Man On the Sabbath - Luke 14:1-6

- Quite a bit happens in this one dinner party
- I smell a trap here: spending time with a Pharisee, on the Sabbath, a person in need of healing...
- Dropsy - modern medical term is edema, “a condition characterized by an excess of watery fluid collecting in the cavities or tissues of the body”
- This is the fifth time Christ heals someone on the Sabbath

114. Lessons in Humility - Luke 14:7-14

- Still at the same dinner party...
- The setting of the lesson in vs. 4-8 is feast. There were many customs surrounding seating of more honorable individuals. The places of highest honor would be next to the host. The most honorable would, judged by religion, would be most aged and holy.
- The lesson is to not seek honor, but let it come to you.
- Adam Clarke on vs. 12 - “...what he inculcates here is charity to the poor; and what he condemns is those entertainments which are given to the rich, either to flatter them, or to procure a similar return...”

115. Parable of the Great Supper - Luke 14:15-24

- Still at the same dinner party...
- vs. 15 - I kind of imagine the host saying this to change the subject after Christ’s stinging teaching in vs. 7-14. The statement is about looking forward to the Millennial Kingdom.
- Each of the individuals invited to the supper gave excuses. They picture those that are too busy to have time for God.
- Even though some reject God’s call, it doesn’t mean that others will not heed it.

116. True Discipleship - Luke 14:25-35

- vs 26 - “hate” as used in this context is illustrating by comparison how much our love for Christ should be compared to all others. It is used similarly in Matthew 6:24 and Romans 9:13. A clearer explanation is found in Matthew 10:37.
- vs. 27 - Note that not one person present except for Christ knows the magnitude of this statement, because not one of them knew that Christ would be crucified. This alludes to the Roman custom of humiliating condemned criminals by making them carry their own cross to their place of execution.
- A couple of parables are given to illustrate those that foolishly try to half-heartedly follow Christ. True faith is finishing faith.
 - vs. 28-30 - Parable of the Tower
 - vs. 31-32 - Parable of King at War
- vs. 34-35 - Christ used this same illustration a couple of times (Matthew 5:13 and Mark 9:50)

Lost and Found

Introduction

- Christ responds to the criticism of the Pharisees with parables

117. Parable of the Lost Sheep - Luke 15:1-7

- NOTE THE SETTING - this is the basis for the parables to follow in this chapter. Christ has been accosted by the Pharisees because He welcomed sinners that came to Him. The parables in Events #117-119 are all Christ's response to their accusation.
- Remember that one of the purposes of Parables covered in Event #49 is "To reveal conduct and character without being too direct".
- Christ has used this same Parable once before in Matthew 18:11-14 (Event #86) with different emphasis.
- How many of us would be satisfied with 99%?

118. Parable of the Lost Coin - Luke 15:8-10

- For any fellow numismatists out there, the coins described here is a silver *drachma* weighing about 4.3 grams, slightly smaller in size than a modern nickel. This is equivalent to a day's pay for common laborers.
- Many people have searched for a historical significance to the number of ten coins. A few theories:
 - If this woman was poor, then perhaps this is her life savings
 - This could be her dowry
 - These coins could be connected as a necklace or headpiece and be an ancient version of a wedding ring.
 - Very likely is some combination of all the above.
- Houses were small, usually with only a door and one window for light. The floor could be dirt or covered in loose fitting stones. Loosing such a small coin would be very easy.
- How many of us would be happy with 90%?

119. Parable of the Prodigal Son - Luke 15:11-32

- We tend to think of a "prodigal" as one who has drifted away from faith and family, but the its literal definition regards one who is "wastefully extravagant".
- Jewish inheritance laws have the eldest son receiving a double portion (see Deuteronomy 21:17). Therefore in this story, the eldest son would stand to receive 2/3 of his father's estate while the younger 1/3.
- vs. 12 - The request made is absolutely unheard of in the ancient world. It is akin to saying that he wishes the father were already dead.
- vs. 15 - swine are unclean animals to Jews (Deuteronomy 14:8 for example)
- To shed some light on how low this young man sank, let me quote the ancient historian Herodotus (ca. 440 B.C.) describing swineherds in Egypt: "The pig is regarded among them as an unclean animal, so much so that if a man in passing accidentally touch a pig, he instantly hurries to the river, and plunges in with all his clothes on. Hence, too, the swineherds, notwithstanding that they are of pure Egyptian blood, are forbidden to enter into any of the temples, which are open to all other Egyptians; and further, no one will give his daughter in marriage to a swineherd, or take a wife from among them, so that the swineherds are forced to intermarry among themselves."
- vs. 16 - "fain" means to be compelled, pleased, or willing under the circumstances.
- vs. 22-23 - let's look at what the father gives the returning son:

- best robe - probably his own
- ring - symbol of authority and acceptance back into the family
- shoes - slaves did not wear shoes of any sort
- fatted calf - a barbecue big enough for the entire town. According to sources online a 1,200 pound cow should produce about 500 pounds of meat.
- The prodigal son may be the star of the story today, but the emphasis of the story begins in vs. 25 - the reaction of the elder brother. Remember the setting from vs. 1-2. Christ has told these three parables to justify His actions and denounce those of the Pharisees. Christ was seeking the lost and received them. Here swiftly deals a knockout blow to the Pharisees criticisms by illustrating their behavior by that of the ungrateful elder son.
- vs. 25-28 - there is so much about the eldest son's reaction that shows his bitter spirit.
 - As soon as he sees that a celebration is taking place he is suspicious. He doesn't investigate himself, but asks a servant.
 - He won't even go into the house! He refuses to have any part of the celebration. This is a great insult to the dignity of the father.
 - Someone has to come to him to work things out.
 - Because the inheritance was already divided, he had nothing to lose materially by his brother's return.
- vs. 29-30 - Note the self- righteous tone. "I have been a good boy, my brother has not. Where's the celebration for me?"
- The father's response:
 - vs. 31 - the eldest son's place is still secure
 - vs. 32 - the celebration of the younger son's return is proper and right.
- NOW, LET'S BRING THIS DOWN TO US:
 - The younger son can be seen as the Christian who falls into sin
 - He squanders the blessings of God
 - He finally looks up when he is flat on his back
 - A Christian can not find peace or happiness in sin. Period.
 - His return is a good thing
 - The father is God.
 - He allows us the free will to make even stupid decisions
 - He may not erase the scars and wounds that sins leaves
 - He is waiting on the return of the prodigal with open arms
 - The eldest son is the self righteous Christian
 - He focuses only on his own good works and the evil works of others
 - He is despondent when someone else gets attention
 - He tries to claim glory from others for himself.

Pharisees and Parables

Introduction

- This appears to be a continuation from the events covered last week as Christ continues to teach against the Pharisees.

120. Parable of the Unjust Steward - Luke 16:1-13

- This may be one of the strangest parables and easiest to misunderstand
- A steward was something of a business manager for a household.
- vs. 3-4 - Note the steward's selfish motivations to plan for his future unemployment
- vs. 6 - 100 measures (the Hebrew *bath*) is probably about 900 gallons.
- vs. 7 - 100 measures (the Hebrew *cor*) is probably about 600 bushels. It is reduced to about 500 bushels in the deal.
- vs. 8 - This is the steward's lord speaking, not THE Lord. He is acknowledging the shrewd business moves of the steward.
- There really isn't a hero to this story. The stewards had acted evilly and tried make provision for his coming unemployment.
- vs. 9 - This is a commandment to use money wisely and "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20)
- Mammon = money or riches
- Money is amoral. It is a tool that can be used for good, used for evil, or simply wasted. The Bible never teaches that money is evil, but that the "love of money" is (I Timothy 6:10). Do you control your money or does your money control you?
- vs. 10-11 - Does God care about how we handle our finances? YES!
- B.H. Carroll: "The application is that the 'children of light' from a higher view-point of the future, extending into an eternity of heaven and with higher moral standards, should so wisely use their fleeting wealth as to make it a friend, not an enemy; to make friends by it, who passing ahead into eternal habitations await to greet and welcome them when they arrive."

121. Speaking Against the Pharisees - Luke 16:14-18

- Christ has hit a nerve with the Pharisees when it comes to money.
- The premise for this brief interlude is that the Pharisees weren't as righteous as they claimed.
- vs. 15 - they sought glory in the eyes of men and not from the Lord
- vs. 16 - The Law and the Prophets (basically the Old Testament) had prepared for the events that began with the ministry of John the Baptist. It was time for action.
- vs. 17 - The Law had not become void. Every detail was about to be fulfilled.
 - Jot - the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *yodh*. Jehovah = יהוה ← That's it!
 - Tittle - small mark on Jewish letters. Difference between ב (bet) and כ (kaph) is that small mark on the bottom right of bet.
- vs. 18 - this is not a discourse by itself by Christ on divorce. This is used by Christ as an illustration of how far the Pharisees, who claimed to follow the Law, disregarded the Law.
- According to Alfred Edersheim in his book *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Book IV, Chapter XXII), rabbis argued some of the following points as sufficient grounds for divorce: unchastity, "spoiled her husband's dinner", being childless after ten years, or "if they transgressed against the Law" which was "explained as referring to such offences as that

of going in public with uncovered head, of spinning in the public streets, or entering into talk with men, to which others add, that of brawling, or of disrespectfully speaking of her husband's parents in his presence.”).

122. The Rich Man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31

- Some regard this as a parable or story. I'm inclined to see it as a factual account. It is the only time that Christ gives a proper name (Lazarus) to someone in His stories.
- In case you run across this, some people call the rich man “Dives” which is from the Latin word for rich man.
- There is some debate on the details of this story, especially regarding what happens to Lazarus and the rich man after their deaths. One theory that men like C.I Scofield have is that before Christ's resurrection there was one place (Hebrew *sheol* or Greek *hades*) that is the “grave” or place the dead go. This place is divided into two compartments, one for the saints (Paradise or Abraham's bosom) and one for the lost. Christ payed the full price for the redemption of these Old Testament saints and they were then entered into Heaven (Ephesians 4:8-10).
- Note the complete reversal of fortunes for these two men.

Practicality and Prophecy

Introduction

- Christ continues His wandering ministry in the final months

123. On Forgiveness - Luke 17:1-6

- Three major lessons in this passage:
 - Everyone will have offenses (literally *stumbling*)
 - The wrong doing is not on the part of the offended, but on the offender
 - The duty of the offended is not to seek revenge, but to forgive the repentant offender
- In light of the difficulty of the preceding, the disciples are asking for help to follow
- mustard seed - round and 1-2 mm (.04-.08 inches) in diameter
- sycamine tree - similar to the sycamore of the Bible and most likely a type of fig tree

124. On Faithfulness - Luke 17:7-10

- Lest the disciple (or any of us) be lifted up in pride over the works God allows us to do, Christ gives this story that illustrates that we shouldn't expect special reward for what is expected of us.
- trow - believe or think

125. Ten Lepers Healed - Luke 17:11-19

- vs. 11 - "midst of Samaria and Galilee" means in between the two.
- See Event #33 in Lesson 10 for information on leprosy.
- vs. 14 - note that they were healed as they obeyed Christ's command
- Remember that Jews hated the Samaritans, so the most unlikely person thanked Christ
- I wonder if today only 10% of us give God the thanks and praise we should

126. Christ's Second Coming - Luke 17:20-37

- The Pharisees were now impatient with Christ. When would he get around to overthrowing the Romans and setting up the kingdom they wanted?
- Remember that the Jews at the time had their own preconceived notion about what the kingdom of God would be: an independent Jewish state.
- vs. 24 - in contrast to His First Coming, the Second Coming will be public and bold
- vs. 25 - the purpose of His First Coming, illustrated in Isaiah 53, and missed by the Jews
- vs. 26-29 - Note the comparisons of Noah (vs. 26-27) and Lot (vs. 28-29). Both of these are have the righteous removed before judgement comes. Probably pictures the Rapture and its suddenness.
- vs. 30 - note the Christ is "revealed". This does not happen at the Rapture. I think this refers to Christ's return at Armageddon and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.
- vs. 31-33 - the a final line will be drawn for those alive at the end of the Tribulation. It will be too late for them to repent as they see Christ's return.
- vs. 34-36 - J. Vernon McGee = "This is, as in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24:37-41, a direct reference to taking away the ungodly in judgment and leaving on earth those who will enter the millennial kingdom."
- vs. 37 - I see two probable explanations of this verse:
 - The imagery of the Battle of Armageddon - see Revelation 19:17
 - The circling birds are a sign that a dead body is around. Christ is telling them that if they want to see the Kingdom then look for the signs.

Parables and Divorce

Introduction

- Christ continues the last stages of His ministry.

127. Parable of the Unjust Judge - Luke 18:1-8

- Jewish law and tradition states that at least a panel of three judges would be used. Alfred Edersheim thinks the judge referred to here is Roman judge, possibly Jewish on the Roman payroll.
- The judge is not a hero in this story. He regards not justice, God, or the people. He had no integrity to do right for any purpose.
- This parable is one of contrast. If unmovable judge could be forced into action, why will not a loving God heed the cries of His children?

128. Parable of the Pharisee and Publican - Luke 18:9-14

- Here is a study in contrast: the self-righteous Pharisee and the penitent Publican
- Pharisees held that righteousness came through careful and meticulous keeping of the Law. This led them to be self-righteous. In two sentences he uses "I" five times.
- Publicans were the lowest of the low in Jewish society. They were "sellouts" who worked for Rome, either through tax collection or bidding on contracts.

129. On Divorce - Matthew 19:3-12, Mark 10:2-12

- We're going to spend some time on this subject...
- Note that this is not an honest inquiry by the Pharisees. They are trying to trick Christ into saying something controversial. With such a debated topic practically any answer could be turned into controversy.
- Some information:
 - God created marriage - Genesis 2:18,21-24
 - God's plan for marriage: a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman
 - We all fall short of God's perfect plan (Romans 3:23), and there are situations where a marriage may end prematurely through divorce
 - Part of the Mosaic Law, as given by God, allowed for divorce - Deuteronomy 24:1-4
 - A "Bill of Divorcement", called a *get*, would read something like:
 - "On the ____ day of the week and ____ day of the month ____ in the year ____ from the creation of the world, according to the mode of reckoning in this place ____ by the River ____, do I ____ son of ____ of the town of ____ and by whatever other name or surname I or my father may be known, and my town and his town, thus determine, being of sound mind and under no constraint; and I do release and send away and put aside thee ____, daughter of ____ and by whatever other name or surname thou and thy father are known, and thy town and his town, who have been my wife from time past hitherto; and hereby I do release thee and send away and put thee aside that thou mayest have permission and control over thyself to go to be married to any man whom thou desirest, and no man shall hinder thee in my name from this day and forever. And thou art permitted to be married to any man. This shall be from me to thee a bill of dismissal, a document of release, and a letter of freedom, according to the law of Moses and Israel."
 - Jewish Rabbis developed many opinions as to sufficient grounds for divorce, many of which we covered in Event #121. This is not to say that all were permissive in divorce, as some held that adultery was the only viable ground.

- Rabbi Akiva ben Joseph (A.D. 50?-132?), who was instrumental in reshaping Judaism after the failed Jewish Revolt, stated “If any man saw a woman handsomer than his own wife, he might put his wife away; because it is said in the law, If she find not favor in his eyes.”
- Jewish historian Josephus (A.D. 37-100?) was married four times, with two divorces. Of his third wife he wrote in his autobiography: “...I divorced my wife also, as not pleased with her behavior, though not till she had been the mother of three children...”
- suffer = “tolerate”
- What does Christ teach on divorce here?
 - The provision of divorce is concession to fallen man - Matthew 19:8, Mark 10:4
 - God created marriage and intended it to be for life - Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:6-9
 - There is sin in frivolous divorces - Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:10-12
 - Christ says the same in the Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 5:32
 - I think we focus too much on the clause “except it be for fornication”. I think this is response to question in Matthew 19:7. Just divorcing and doing the proper paperwork did not wipe the slate clean. In essence, the divorce “snow balls” into causing many more people to stumble.
 - It’s OK to be single - Matthew 10:11-12
- Consider also that Christ is speaking to Jews on Jewish customs and Jewish legal matters. For something addressed to Christians, see what Paul wrote on the subject in 1 Corinthians 7
- So... what about today?
 - Divorce should be avoided except in extreme cases such as serial adultery (Matthew 19:9) or abandonment (1 Corinthians 7:15).
 - Divorce, even if wrongly done, is not a disqualification from God’s love and grace. We all fall short of God’s perfection. There are some disqualifications from certain areas (pastor, etc.), but not from being used by God.
 - Divorced? Remarried? Then make your current marriage work!
- According to Alfred Edersheim in his book *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Book IV, Chapter XXII), rabbis argued some of the following points as sufficient grounds for divorce: unchastity, “spoiled her husband’s dinner”, being childless after ten years, or “if they transgressed against the Law” which was “explained as referring to such offences as that of going in public with uncovered head, of spinning in the public streets, or entering into talk with men, to which others add, that of brawling, or of disrespectfully speaking of her husband’s parents in his presence.”).

Most married woman in the world: Linda Wolfe holds record for being the most married woman in the world. She was married 23 times. Her first marriage at 16 was for love. Her last, in 1996 was for publicity. That year she married preacher Glynn “Scotty” Wolfe. He was the world’s most married man (married 29 times). Linda married a convict, a homeless man, a musician, a plumber. One husband lasted just three days. She married another man three times.

True Riches

Introduction

- Christ continues His wandering ministry in the final months

130. Christ Blesses Children - Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17

- It was common for Jews to take their children to receive a blessing from notable men. This blessing would be spoken while laying hands on the child's head.
- According to MyJewishLearning.com, the modern blessing is as follows:
 - An introductory line:
 - For boys: "May you be like Ephraim and Manasseh." (based on Genesis 48:20)
 - For girls: "May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah."
 - Followed by (based on Numbers 6:24-26):
 - "May God bless you and guard you."
 - "May God show you favor and be gracious to you."
 - "May God show you kindness and grant you peace."
- The meaning of "suffer" has changed over the years. In this context it means to tolerate or allow.

131. The Rich Young Man - Matthew 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30

- The picture I have in this individual is that he is very anxious and troubled for his soul. He runs to Christ (Mark 10:17) to seek the secret of eternal life.
- I don't think he is seeking Christ as the ultimate authority, but is merely seeking his opinion to compare against others he has counseled. Christ's response about using the word "good" points to this.
- The answer Christ gives is not the not the answer for today (see Acts 16:30). Remember that He is speaking to a Jew still under the Law. The Law couldn't save him but it would point him to God.
- The Jewish scholar Maimonides (lived 1135-1204) believed there were 613 commandments in the Pentateuch.
- Note Christ's final response to this young man, as it reveals his character. His god was his great possessions as they had control over his life.
- There is some debate about the "eye of the needle". There was a similar hyperbole used by Jewish rabbis about elephants passing through the eye of a needle. Some people think this refers to a small gate that traders could enter a walled city through after the main gates were closed.
- Note that Christ says it is impossible for men to save themselves, but God can do it!
- Peter's response is to contrast the disciples with the young man that has just left.

132. Parable of the Laborers - Matthew 20:1-16

- Grape harvest would be around the time of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) which is roughly in September. There would be about 12 hours of daylight at this time.
- The penny is a silver Roman denarius, about the size of our nickel. This is would be common for a day's pay to the common laborer
- A few principles from this parable:
 - God rewards based on faithfulness to the task and not on numbers.
 - It is not for us to reconsider God's judgment, but to trust that He did right.
 - We should rejoice in the blessing of others and not become covetous and bitter.
 -

- Here's a handy dandy chart to illustrate the workers and pay:

| Group | Hired | Hours Worked (to 6 p.m.) | Pay |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 (vs. 1-2) | "early" = 6 a.m.? | 12 hours | 1 penny (vs. 10) |
| 2 (vs. 3-4) | third hour = 9 a.m. | 9 hours | unknown |
| 3 (vs. 5) | sixth hour = noon | 6 hours | unknown |
| 4 (vs. 5) | ninth hour = 3 p.m. | 3 hours | unknown |
| 5 (vs. 6-7) | eleventh hour = 5 p.m. | 1 hour (vs. 12) | 1 penny (vs. 9) |

From Jericho to Jerusalem

Introduction

- Christ begins to journey towards Jerusalem in the final days of His ministry
- Next week we will begin the “Passion Week”, and somewhere around sixty events remain!!

133. Foretelling His Death - Matthew 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34, Luke 18:31-34

- Christ is very specific in the details given, including who was plotting His death (priests and scribes), how He would die (crucifixion), when He would rise (three days).
- Christ death was no accident. He knew from the beginning, or rather *before* the beginning, that His sojourn on earth would lead Him to a cross.
- Luke is careful to note in vs. 34 that the disciples did not comprehend what Christ was telling them. I don't think He was warning them of what was to come, but that after all these things had happened they would have peace in remembering that it was God's plan.

134. An Ambitious Request - Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45

- There is a slight difference in the two accounts regarding who makes the request. Matthew says it was the mother of James and John while Mark says it was the two disciples themselves. The mother may have been the one to say the words, but her sons were on board with the request.
- The request is basically that Christ makes James and John the two most important people in the Kingdom when He takes the throne. Pretty bold if you ask me...
- The last verse (in either passage) could be Christ's ministry in a nutshell, and our example to follow.

135. The Blind Men near Jericho - Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-19:1

- There is another slight difference in these accounts. Matthew has Christ healing *two* blind men, while Mark and Luke have Him healing *one*. Mark even gives the blind man a name, Bartimeus son of Timeus. I don't see this as an inconsistency, just that Mark and Luke are only speaking of one of the two that were healed.
- “Thou Son of David” is the blind men acknowledging Christ for who He is, the Messiah and heir to the throne of David.

136. Zaccheus - Luke 19:2-10

- Sunday School Sing-Along Time!!! “Zaccheus was a wee little man, and a...”
- A publican was a contractor working for the Roman government, usually as a tax farmer. They would bid to collect taxes in an area. They could pocket any “extra” money that was taken in.
- “I restore him fourfold” - Roman law demanded this if convicted of extorting taxes, but Jewish Law required only what was lost plus 20% (Numbers 5:6-7)
- Verse 10 is another verse that captures the theme of Christ's ministry.

137. Parable of the Pounds - Luke 19:11-28

- Pound = Jewish measurement called a *mina*. 1 *mina* was equal to 60 *shekels* and 60 *mina* was equal to 1 *talent*. According to some various websites, I think a *mina* is about 820 grams (28.9 ounces), with silver at about \$21/ounce that's around \$600 with today's prices if this was silver and it probably was.
- The primary application for this parable is that Christ's Kingdom will not be immediate (see vs. 11), and that Christ will hold us responsible for our actions at His return.

The Triumphal Entry

Introduction

- We begin the “Passion Week” leading up to the Crucifixion.
- These events takes place on Friday and Saturday, the 9th and 10th of Nisan (April 8-9 in 2014).
- I’m still working on charting the events of the Passion Week with Wednesday as the day of Crucifixion, so please bear with me until I get everything straightened out.

138. Arrival at Bethany - John 11:55-12:1

- This sets the stage for the events as Christ arrives in Bethany (2 miles east of Jerusalem)
- At six days before the passover, it would be five before the crucifixion. According to my calculations using Wednesday as crucifixion day then this should be Friday.

139. The Triumphal Entry - Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19

- QUIZ - What is the last event that all four Gospels covered? Feeding of the 5,000 in Lesson #17.
- Christ riding on a donkey has definite implications:
 - Fulfilled prophecy - Zechariah 9:9
 - The use of a donkey gives the symbolism of peace. Horses are symbols of war, and when Christ returns this is what He’ll be riding (Revelation 19:11)
- Spreading garments in the path of royalty was a sign of respect, waving (date) palm branches was a sign of victory.
- I think that in this event Christ is offered to the people of Israel to be their Messiah. They cheer now, but in less then a week the shouts of “Hosanna!” become “Crucify Him!” as they reject Him.

140. Cleanses the Temple - Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48

- Christ enters His ministry (John 2:13-25, Event #17, Lesson 7) and closes it by cleansing the Temple.
- Some notes from that earlier lesson:
 - In the Temple complex, many animals “pre-approved” for sacrifices were sold
 - The “Temple Tax” could only be paid in approved coins - the Tyrian Shekel
 - One half-shekel per man over 20 years old - Exodus 30:13-16, II Chronicles 24:4-14
 - The “moneychangers” exchanged other money for shekels, with about 11% interest
 - These practices were not popular and many abuses abounded
- In the aftermath, many seek Him to be healed.
- At the close of this day (Friday?) He returns to Bethany for the night.

141. Curses the Barren Fig Tree - Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14,20-26;

- On the Fig Tree
 - This was Spring and the usual fig harvest would be during the summer.
 - Though figs were not yet in season, the tree gave signs that it was producing fruit from its foliage.
- It looks like Matthew compresses the event’s time as Mark as them seeing the tree withered on the following day.
- Christ uses the opportunity of the disciples’ amazement to use the withered fig tree as an object lesson.

Challenged in the Temple

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday the 11th of Nisan. I think.

142. Christ's Authority Questioned - Matthew 21:23-27, Mark 11:27-33, Luke 20:1-8

- Christ is challenged on His authority to teach and "do these things" (cleanse the Temple)
- Christ does not answer their request (there was no right answer for His accusers) by forcing them into a similar position regarding John.

143. Parable of Two Sons - Matthew 21:28-32

- The background of this parable is given above.
- The parable illustrates obedience through two sons, one who obeys after delay and repentance and one who acts like he obeys but does not.
- Christ then points this small parable's application at those that challenged Him

144. Parable of Husbandmen - Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19

- This parable pictures God's long-suffering mercy towards Israel. It illustrates how time after time Israel rejected God and His messengers. It ends with God sending the ultimate messenger only to be rejected again.
- You can observe a change in the tone of this parable from others as it ends with harsh judgment
- Christ points to His rejection as fulfillment of Psalm 118:22.
- Note that His enemies understood that they were targeted in these parables.

145. Parable of Marriage of the King's Son - Matthew 22:1-14

- This parable is similar to one in Luke 14:15-24 but with darker tones.
- Not only do we see the rejection of the wedding invitation and subsequent open call, we also see the judgment of those who wronged the servants.
- The "wedding garment" was probably the best clothing an individual owned and worn only on certain festivals and events such as weddings. To show up not dressed for the occasion was a tremendous insult. Some cultures (honestly not sure if the Jews did) would even have extra clothes available in case someone came improperly dressed.
- This was not a mistake the man made in not dressing appropriately, it was an obvious insult.
- Though the Gospel call is broad, the way is still straight and narrow. Anyone can come to Christ but only on His terms. This man represents someone trying to make it to Heaven another way besides God's way, or perhaps he's a "wolf in sheep's clothing" who forgot his wool coat.

146. Tribute to Caesar - Matthew 22:15-22, Mark 12:13-17, Luke 20:20-28

- Yet another challenge without a "right answer". If Christ says pay the Roman taxes then He is supporting the occupying pagan government, and if He says don't pay the taxes then Rome is going to come after Him for sedition.
- COIN GEEK ALERT - It's a silver Roman denarius, some think like the one here (from <http://www.accla.org/actaaccla/tiberius.html>)
- Christ's response is basically that we ought to obey government and religion in their proper places. Both are ordained of God.



Sparring in the Temple

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday the 11th of Nisan. I think.

147. Questioning the Resurrection - Matthew 22:23-33, Mark 12:18-27, Luke 20:29-40

- The Sadducees now attempt to trip up Christ using their own unbelief in the Resurrection of the dead.
- They quote Deuteronomy 25:5. It's purpose regards preserving inheritances.
- Christ responds that they have erred in assuming the future life is identical with the present one.
- The words Christ quotes can be found in Exodus 3:6,16. Moses was born 400+ years after Abraham died.

148. The Greatest Commandments - Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34

- Lawyer = scribe, expert in the Jewish Law
- This purpose of this question appears to humiliate Christ if His answer was not good enough for the experts.
- Christ quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

149. Son of David - Matthew 22:41-46, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44

- Christ now becomes the interrogator as He asks from which family the Messiah should come from.
- II Samuel 7:12-14 is the basis for the Messiah descending from David.
- Christ turns them on their heads by dissecting Psalm 110:1. Psalm 110 was written by David and is about the rule of the Messiah.
 - LORD = Jehovah - Hebrew - the Self-Existent or Eternal one. Only used for God.
 - Lord = Adon (plural Adonai) - Hebrew for Lord or Master
- This is an excellent example that even though the Jews sought for a Messiah they really did not have a full understanding of Messiah's person or role.

150. Woes Against the Scribes and Pharisees - Matthew 23:1-39, Mark 12:38-40, Luke 20:45-47

- Christ now goes on the offensive as He takes aim at the religious rulers
- Matthew 23 to me is a troubling picture of how good religion can turn evil
 - They do not practice what they preach – vs. 3
 - They have no concern for those under them – vs. 4
 - They do things to be seen – vs. 5-7
 - They seek public honor – vs. 8-12
 - Their actions deter people from God – vs. 13
 - They spiritualize their wrong doing – vs. 14
 - They recruit but do nothing to help the recruits – vs. 15
 - They focus on the irrelevant and minuscule – vs. 16-22
 - They neglect the true fundamentals – vs. 23-24
 - They focus on their appearance – vs. 25-28
 - They claim superiority, to have “arrived” – vs. 29-33
 - They attack men sent from God – vs. 34-35
- To the casual observer it would have seemed that the Pharisees were the most religious Jews. Christ knew their hearts and that they conspired to kill their Messiah.

Mites, Greeks, and Jews

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday the 11th of Nisan. I think.

151. Widow's Mite - Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4

- Christ has just finished his exposé on the Pharisees when He is afforded a wonderful object lesson on true faith.
- Inside the Temple courts where located various trumpet-shaped boxes for offerings.
- COIN GEEK ALERT!!!!
 - The smallest coin denominations at the time of Christ were the *prutah* or *lepton* (half-prutah). These coins were massed produced up to a century before Christ and are of notoriously poor quality and inconsistent weight and size. It is difficult even for experts to discern between the two.
 - Roughly speaking: 1 *denarius* (penny) = 4 *sestertius* = 8 *dupondius* = 16 *as* (farthing)= 64 *quadrans* (farthing) = 128 *prutah* (mite?) = 256 *leptons* (mite?)
 - David Hendin, a noted coin expert, gives even lesser values than above: 192 *prutah* or 384 *leptons* to 1 *denarius*
 - 1 pomegranate = 1 *prutah*
 - 1 loaf of bread = 32-48 leptons
 - Most experts believe it was the extremely common coin minted under the Hasmonean ruler Alexander Jannaeus in about 78 B.C. These are VERY abundant and can be purchased on eBay for less than \$10.

152. Greeks Wish to See Christ - John 12:20-36

- The Greeks referred to here seem to be non-Jews who are simply curious about the famous Jesus.
- Christ's response is that if they really want to see something then just hold on.
 - He speaks of fulfilling the purpose of His coming through His death
- God the Father audibly speaks for the third time in Christ's earthly ministry (also at Baptism and Transfiguration)
- It is obvious that Christ speaks of His death by crucifixion in vs. 32 as the people clearly understood that He spoke of someone's death.

153. Unbelief of the Jews - John 12:37-59

- John pauses here to highlight the fact that many still did not believe on Christ and that this is fulfillment of prophecy.
- vs. 38 quotes Isaiah 53:1
- vs. 40 quotes Isaiah 6:9
- vs. 41 - Note that John here states that "the Lord" that Isaiah saw in Isaiah 6 was none other that Jesus Christ.
- vs. 42-43 - many today even still reject Christ from peer pressure
- Christ's comments in vs. 44-50 can be summed up as saying that not only people rejecting/believing Him but rejecting/believing God the Father.

The Olivet Discourse - Part I

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday the 12th of Nisan. I think.

154. The Olivet Discourse - Matthew 24:1-25:46, Mark 13:1-37, Luke 21:5-36

- NOTES ON OUR STUDY OF THIS PASSAGE
 - When it comes to prophecy there are many different opinions. This is mine and I readily acknowledge there are good men I respect that may disagree in some areas.
 - I absolutely reject the idea that this was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
 - We will focus our study on Matthew's account as it is longer and more familiar
- The Setting (24:1-3)
 - While touring the Temple complex, Christ comments (vs. 2) that the buildings they see will be utterly destroyed. This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. as the Romans under future Emperor Titus leveled most of the city after a lengthy siege. This is still commemorated by the Jews on the 9th of Av (2014 date: August 4-5).
 - The disciples press Him for more information, and what follows is known as the Olivet Discourse because it was given on the Mount of Olives.
- The World at the End (24:4-14)
 - The signs that are given here a point toward the Tribulation, but we can see their growth and maturation in our present times.
 - vs. 8 - "You think what I just told you was bad, just what to hear what's next!"
 - vs. 13 - this verse speaks of those that survive the Tribulation and enter the Millennial Kingdom on earth. THIS IS NOT FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY.
- The Great Tribulation (24:15-22)
 - Abomination of Desolation - described by Daniel as committed by the Antichrist 3 1/2 years into the Tribulation (Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11).
 - Christ's descriptions is one of sudden (vs. 16-20) and terrible judgment (vs. 21-22).
- The False Christs and the True Christ's Coming (24:23-31)
 - Here we have the Second Coming contrasted to the appearance of pretenders.
 - vs. 28 - I think this is similar to our saying "where there is smoke there is fire". The fulfilled signs (smoke, eagles) point to the fact that He is coming (fire, carcass).
 - vs. 29-31 - This is Christ's Coming at the end of the Tribulation
- Parable of the Fig Tree (24:32-33)
 - This illustrates knowing the times by the signs around you.
- The Sureness of the Prophecy (24:34-35)
 - When God says something will happen it as if it has already happened.
- The Suddenness of Judgment (24:36-41)
 - Although portions of this may be applicable to the Rapture, I think this refers to the end of the Tribulation. The two groups of people are those that who are taken to face judgment and those that enter into the Millennial Kingdom on Earth.
 - John Walvoord: "To illustrate this approximate time of the second coming, He used the historic flood in the time of Noah. While those observing Noah building the ark could anticipate that a flood was impending, it was obvious that the flood could not come until the ark was completed. So also with the second coming. Unlike the rapture, which has no preceding signs and therefore could occur any time, the second coming of Christ to the earth to set up His kingdom cannot occur until the preceding signs have been fulfilled. When the ark was completed and Noah and his family and the animals were in it, those observing could anticipate that the predicted flood could occur any day. But even then, they could not predict the day nor the hour."

- Watching and Working (24:42-51)
 - The last passage in this chapter gives instructions to those looking for His Coming
 - The illustration of the goodman and the thief (vs. 43-44) shows that they must be vigilant and expectant
 - The illustration of the wise servant (vs. 45-51) shows that they must be faithful and active, and then contrasts them with the unbelieving, evil servant.

Matthew 24 Reference

by Matthew Gage



The Olivet Discourse - Part II

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday the 12th of Nisan. I think.
- We continue from our last lesson as Christ teaches the disciples about the End Times

154. The Olivet Discourse (Continued) - Matthew 25:1-46

- NOTE - we deal in these parables with Divine Judgment based people's actions or works. Faith is still the key. Works are evidence of faith (James 2:14-26).
- THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS - vs. 1-13
 - Very Simplified Outline of a Jewish Wedding
 1. Marriage contract made, girl agrees to marry guy - LEGALLY MARRIED NOW
 2. Guy leaves to prepare new home and fulfill wedding contract
 3. When everything is ready, a time is set for the wedding
 4. Guy leads torch-lit procession to girl's house, where she waits with friends
 5. With the friends waiting, the couple has a very short honeymoon
 6. The wedding party then walks to the guy's family's house for a celebration
 7. Celebrate for seven days, return to normal life
 - The women mentioned in this passage were the friends of the bride that were waiting for the groom to arrive. The groom's arrival is later than expected, catching five of them unprepared with not enough fuel for their lamps. While they go to buy more fuel the wedding carries on. When they finally return the wedding celebration has already started and the door to enter is shut (its probably very early in the morning). They are denied entrance on the grounds that they were not part of the wedding party that had already arrived.
 - vs. 1 - "THEN..." refers back to the previous chapter and setting. This parable applies to the Second Coming, the judgment and division around Armageddon and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.
 - J. Dwight Pentecost in *Things to Come* (p. 282) states that this parable describes "the judging of living Israel on the earth to determine who will go into the kingdom."
 - For prophecies concerning the judgments associated with the Second Coming, see Ezekiel 20:37-38,40-42 and Malachi 3:2-5
- THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS - vs. 14-30
 - Christ tells a similar story in Parable of the Pounds in Luke 19:11-28, Event #136
 - 1 *talent* = ~75 pounds. In silver (at \$20/ounce) that's \$24,000.
 - vs. 18 - in archaeology this would be called a *hoard*, kind of like stuffing money in your mattress.
 - vs. 26-27 - the lord points out the servant's hypocrisy. If the servant had actually believed what he claimed he would have been stirred to action.
 - I know we preachers usually take a very different direction on this parable (I'm guilty), but the primary interpretation of this parable is similar to the previous. It deals with judgement of individuals at the Second Coming of Christ.
- JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS - vs. 31-46
 - vs. 31 - the setting of this is clearly at the Second Coming at the establishing of the Kingdom
 - vs. 32 - as the previous two parables may apply to Jews, this one is for the Gentiles, the living and NOT the dead (compare to Revelation 20:11-15 for example)
 - vs. 34 - What is the reward? Entering the Kingdom.
 - Gentiles entering the Kingdom is prophesied (Daniel 7:14, Isaiah 55:5, Micah 4:2)

Preparation

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Monday-Tuesday, the 13th-14th of Nisan. I think.
- We pick up on Monday evening as Christ returns to Bethany after delivering the Olivet Discourse. We end on Tuesday evening maybe 12 hours before the crucifixion.

155. The Conspiracy - Matthew 26:1-5, Mark 14:1-2, Luke 22:1-2

- The plot for the murder of Christ is finalized.
- Caiaphas was High Priest from 18-36 under the Roman prefects Valerius Gratus and Pontius Pilate and was married to the daughter of previous High Priest (and still powerful) Annas.
- This is two days before Passover and one day before the crucifixion.

156. Anointed by Mary - Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, John 12:2-10

- There is some debate as to whether Matthew and Mark are describing a different event than John, but I personally see this as the same event.
- This meal is held at Simon the Leper's house (Matthew 26:6) but Lazarus, Mary, and Martha are present (John 12:2-3).
- Spikenard - an amber-colored oil used for perfume, medicine, incense, and spice. In context here, probably used for preparing a dead body. Judas' valuation has it almost a year's salary for a common laborer.
- John's account is illuminating also in that he names the source of the murmuring as Judas Iscariot.
- The rebuke of Christ towards Judas seems to be the final straw for him.

157. Judas Joins the Conspiracy - Matthew 26:14-16, Mark 14:10-11, Luke 22:3-6

- Judas now agrees to betray Christ at a convenient time.
- Thirty Pieces of Silver (*shekels*) - the value of a slave's life (Exodus 21:32)

158. Preparing for the Last Supper - Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-13

- First Day of Unleavened Bread - the day before Passover when its preparations are made. Though not technically a holy day much work and preparation was required for the Passover to come.
- There is a lot of debate about the day of the week (Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday) or date (day before Passover or Passover). I contend for Wednesday the day BEFORE Passover. To hold to this timeline, this event marks the beginning of Tuesday evening, the start of the Jewish day of Nisan 14th. Christ will be crucified in about 14 hours.
- A man carrying water, as having drawn it from a well, is most unusual in that it was generally in ancient days the work of women.
- upper room - probably a gazebo-like structure on built on top of a flat-roofed home.

The Last Supper

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Tuesday night, the 14th of Nisan.

159. The Last Supper - Matthew 26:20, Mark 14:17, Luke 22:14-18

- Christ is gathered with the Twelve in the Upper Room for one last evening together before the trials to come.
- Once again, I do not believe this is the Passover meal they are observing, as Christ is crucified on the day BEFORE Passover (John 13:1-2; 19:31,42). The meal they ate was similar to the Passover, maybe consisting of items prepared for the upcoming feast.
- Notes on how Jews would eat:
 - They sat or reclined on couches (more likely for feasts) around a table
 - There were very strict customs on who sat where
 - Head of family would bless food and be the first to eat or drink
 - Everyone ate directly from the serving platters in the center of the table
 - People ate with their fingers except the possible use of a knife
 - Wash hands before and after eating

160. The Lord's Supper - Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20

- Here Christ institutes a memorial that has been observed ever since in remembrance of His sacrifice for us.
- Paul writes about observing the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11:23-26
- This is not part of the Passover or a Christianization of Jewish customs. It is something new.

161. Contention Among the Disciples - Luke 22:24-30

- This appears to have been going on throughout the meal, possible arguing about who sat in places of more honor.
- Christ rebukes them by word and deed, probably culminating in His washing their feet.

162. Christ Washes the Disciples' Feet - John 13:1-20

- Christ here performs one of the humblest tasks a servant may be required to do.
- This is a stinging rebuke to the disciples' quarreling as Christ illustrates servant leadership
- Some believe this is a church ordinance, but we do not. It is an example to follow and not a command.
- Interesting note - Christ washed Judas' feet.

163. Judas - Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23, John 13:21-35

- Christ has been clear that one of the Twelve should betray Him. The disciples cannot figure out who among them would do it.
- Peter convinces John to ask (John 13:23-24)
- To "sop" is to eat bread by dipping it in a oil or sauce.

164. Fate of the Disciples - Matthew 26:31-35, Mark 14:27-31, Luke 22:31-38, John 13:36-38

- Christ points to the fulfillment of Zechariah 13:7
- Peter's boldness here is quite the contrast to his thrice denial that Christ foretells.
- Luke adds additional instruction describing the coming peril for the disciples.

Comfort and the Comforter

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Tuesday night, the 14th of Nisan.
- These final teaching of Christ to His disciples begins in the Upper Room after Judas' departure and continues into their journey to Gethsemane

165. The Final Discourse - Part 1 - John 14:1-31

- Christ begins this teaching after pointing out Peter's and the disciples' coming lack of faith
- John chapters 14, 15, and 16 are part of one event and lesson, but we will follow the chapter divisions which follow the overall themes very well.
- **Section I - The Comfort of Christ - John 14**
 - The Comfort of Heaven - vs. 1-6
 - *The comfort that, no matter how hard the way may be, we have a guaranteed destination.*
 - Where are we going? - "In my Father's house"
 - How will we get there? - "I [Christ] am the way"
 - The Comfort of the Father - vs. 7-11
 - *The comfort that Christ was no mere man, but God incarnate come to reveal the Father to all.*
 - To know God is to know Christ and to know Christ is to know God.
 - The Comfort of Greater Works - vs. 12
 - *The comfort that great things are still possible and that we should not live in the glories of the past.*
 - The Comfort of Answered Prayer - vs. 13-14
 - *The comfort that our prayers are heard through the authority of Christ*
 - The Comfort of the Holy Spirit - vs. 15-26
 - *The comfort that we have the Third Person of the Trinity to guide and empower us.*
 - The chief attribute of the Holy Spirit is HOLINESS, thus the "if" statement of vs. 15 and the world not receiving Him in vs. 17.
 - NOTE - Throughout these chapters the eternal division of men (saved/lost) is shown. Here it is in he that keeps Christ's commandments (saved) and he that does not follow Christ's commandments (lost). You are on one side or the other, and you DO NOT switch back and forth based on following Christ's commandments.
 - The Comfort of Peace - vs. 27-29
 - *The comfort of rest and calm through Christ's redemptive work.*
 - vs. 28-29 - the peace of knowing what is to come
- Departing for Gethsemane - vs. 30-31

Life and Power

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Tuesday night, the 14th of Nisan.
- This takes place en route to the Garden of Gethsemane, possibly near the Temple or Mount of Olives

165. The Final Discourse - Part 2 - John 15:1-27

- Christ begins this teaching after pointing out Peter's and the disciples' coming lack of faith
- John chapters 14, 15, and 16 are part of one event and lesson, but we will follow the chapter divisions which follow the overall themes very well.
- **Section II - Vines and Branches - John 15**
 - Bearing Fruit - vs. 1-8
 - Just as a branch draws its life and nutrients from its vine, so does a Christian draw their power from Christ. There is not life or growth when these are separated.
 - Fruit - the best illustration of this is the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.
 - I personally reject the interpretation that "fruit" here refers to soul winning.
 - We cannot save souls, that's God's work. We can only share the Gospel.
 - The word "bear" here means to carry, not to produce.
 - Abide vs. Abide Not = illustrates the Saved vs. Lost division. This is not a question of keeping or losing salvation.
 - Love - vs. 9-17
 - God's Love is brought to us through Christ, and we are to show that same love.
 - vs. 15 - the new relationships we have through Christ, not just servants but friends and even family with God.
 - vs. 16 - this is not an illustration of Calvinistic doctrine. Christ is talking to the disciples that He had called for a purpose.
 - Hatred - vs. 18-25
 - We take a 180 degree turn in regards to subjects here as Christ contrasts God's love for us with the world's hatred of us.
 - As much as God loved us, Satan hates us. As we show love to our Christian brethren, the world shows their hatred for Christ.
 - vs. 20 - remember the source of the world's hatred towards Christianity is not personal towards us, it is an extension of their rejection and hatred toward God.
 - cloke = cloak, figuratively used here to signify an excuse.
 - Comforter - vs. 26-27
 - God has given us the Holy Spirit to aid the disciples, and us today, through the dark times described above.

The Final Lessons

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Tuesday night, the 14th of Nisan.
- This takes place en route to the Garden of Gethsemane.

165. The Final Discourse - Part 3 - John 16:1-33

- Christ begins this teaching after pointing out Peter's and the disciples' coming lack of faith
- John chapters 14, 15, and 16 are part of one event and lesson, but we will follow the chapter divisions which follow the overall themes very well.
- **Section III - The Comfort of Christ - John 16**
 - The Purpose of the Lesson - vs. 1-6
 - The purpose of telling of the dangers to come (see 15:18-25) was to prepare, and not scare, the disciples.
 - vs. 1 - *offended* means to stumble
 - The Coming of the Comforter - vs. 7-15
 - Consider the shock of the statement, "It is expedient for you that I go away". The disciples will only see the suffering and death of their friend. They will later see what we see: that we gained everything through Christ's sacrifice.
 - The ministry of the Spirit is summed up here as:
 - to show the evilness of sin and the goodness of righteousness - vs. 9-10
 - to reveal the coming judgment of the sinful and the righteous - vs. 11
 - to instruct us in truth - vs. 12-3
 - to glorify and reveal Christ - vs. 14-15
 - Sorrow and Joy - vs. 16-22
 - vs. 16 - this illustrates the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ
 - vs. 21 - For the Christian we know that no matter the hardships we face that joy beyond compare awaits us in the end.
 - The New Boldness - vs. 23-33
 - vs. 23 - We gain boldness in prayer through the access gained through Christ's blood.
 - vs. 25 - Now as the hour grows late, Christ abandons the use of parables to speak clearly about the power of prayer.
 - vs. 29 - the disciples have been shocked by the boldness of Christ's teaching this night.
 - vs. 33 - Why do we still struggle when we know He has conquered?

The Real “Lord’s Prayer”

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on Tuesday night, the 14th of Nisan.
- This probably takes place near the Garden of Gethsemane.

165. The Real “Lord’s Prayer” - John 17:1-26

- Yes, I know we covered the what we call the “Lord’s Prayer” in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. That prayer was given as a model to be followed, but here we see how Christ prayed and what He prayed for.
- The Prayer For Himself - vs. 1-5
 - This is not a selfish prayer. Christ praying to be glorified is not for Himself but for His task - salvation to mankind (see vs. 2-3)
 - Note the remarks concerning Glorification:
 - Christ had glory before (vs. 5) that was laid aside in His Incarnation
 - Christ glorified the Father in His earthly ministry (vs. 4)
 - Christ asks to be glorified, probably referring to the resurrection (vs. 1)
 - This glory is points back to the Father (vs. 1)
 - We can have God’s glory through Christ (vs. 22)
 - We can bring glory to Christ (vs. 10)
 - Christ wants us to behold His future glory (vs. 24)
- The Prayer For His Disciples - vs. 6-19
 - This portion of the prayer is specifically for these eleven men that Christ has trained and will entrust the building of the Church to (vs. 9)
 - vs. 6-8 point toward the training and preparation of the disciples
 - vs. 11-19 point toward task ahead of the disciples after the Ascension
 - vs. 11 - note the closing mention of unity.
 - vs. 17 - similar concept Ephesians 5:26
- The Prayer For His Church - vs. 20-26
 - This portion of the prayer looks forward those that believe the Gospel spread by the disciples (vs. 20)
 - vs. 21 - note another mention of unity
 - vs. 22 - note yet another mention of unity, but with God and not amongst ourselves
 - vs. 23 - this is how we have unity: through Christ in us.

Arrested and Tried by the Jews

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place on overnight into the early hours of Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan.
- There are so many things happening over the next 12 hours that it is difficult to get a solid chronology of these events.

166. Gethsemane - Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:39-46, John 18:1

- 12:00 a.m.?
- Gethsemane - translated "oil press". Many olive trees grew around the Mt. of Olives
- It is probable this was a favorite refuge of Christ and familiar to the disciples.
- As the disciples succumb to slumber, Christ prays with such agony that He
 - sweat blood (Hematidrosis)
 - strengthened by an angel

167. Betrayal - Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-52, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:2-12

- 1:00 a.m.?
- Only John mentions the mob as having lanterns and torches. The moon would be nearly full being the 14th day of the lunar month.
- John also is the only to mention the mob falling backwards as He spoke (18:6), an interesting display of His power as He is arrested. Note also He identifies Himself as "I am" and compare to Exodus 3:14.
- I think Judas' kiss was to signal which of the crowd was Christ lest the wrong person be arrested.
- Peter strikes Malchus and Christ's healing of the wound is His final miracle.
- Think about it: they just arrested someone: (1) who spoke with such power that they fell backwards and (2) performed a miracle by healing Malchus' ear. Doesn't seemed to have made an impact on them.
- Mark adds an additional tidbit about a fleeing young man (14:51-52)
- According to Jewish law and customs, it would have been ILLEGAL to:
 - arrest or try someone at night
 - use a traitor in arrest or trial
 - make an arrest without a court mandate
 - bind an uncondemned man

168. Before Annas - John 18:13-14

- 2:00 a.m.?
- The first trial of Christ is a preliminary examination before Annas.
- Annas was the former High Priest and the most powerful of all the Jewish rulers. He was father-in-law to the current High Priest Caiphas.
- The purpose of this trial may have been to find fault in Christ's teachings.
- According to Jewish law and customs, it would have been ILLEGAL to:
 - have a legal proceeding at night
 - have a preliminary hearing to establish guilt. Guilt should already be established.
 - have a legal proceeding in private
 - physically harm or bully a defendant or witness

169. Before Caiphas and Sanhedrin - Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65, Luke 22:54,63-66; John 18:24

- 3:00 a.m.?
- The second trial of Christ is before the current High Priest, Caiphas, and the faction of the Sanhedrin that was part of the plot to kill Him.
- The charge is heresy.
- Witnesses are introduced in this trial. Many of these are lying and their stories do not corroborate. Finally two agree about His statement about destroying the Temple and raising it again in three days (John 2:19-20).
- According to Jewish law and customs, it would have been ILLEGAL to:
 - have a legal proceeding at night
 - physically harm or bully a defendant or witness
 - rend the High Priest's garments (Leviticus 21:10)

170. Peter's Denial - Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:54-62, John 18:15-18, 25-27

- This event takes place during the the previous two trials.
- As predicted hours earlier, Peter denies the Lord three times before the cock crows twice.
- Luke 22:61 adds that Christ saw Peter saw each other. Perhaps this is leading up to the next trial.

171. Before Sanhedrin - Matthew 27:1-2, Mark 15:1, Luke 22:66-23:1, John 18:28

- Sunrise - 6:00 a.m.?
- The third trial of Christ is once again before the Sanhedrin. Two trials were required to try a defendant, and this is a rubber-stamp approval of the previous trial's judgment.

Tried and Condemned

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place in hours after sunrise on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan.
- There are so many things happening over the next 12 hours that it is difficult to get a solid chronology of these events.

172. Judas commits suicide - Matthew 27:3-10, Acts 1:18-19

- At some point after Christ is condemned by the Jews, Judas tries to give his reward back
- Um... they wouldn't except Judas' money on religious pretenses (Deuteronomy 23:18 maybe?), but they had no problem paying Judas very same coins to set in motion their plot to slay Christ???
- Jeremy = Jeremiah. Unfortunately this prophecy is not preserved in our Bibles, though a similar one is found in Zechariah 11:13.
- The potter's field - possibly a field that had been been excavated for clay and was now worthless, so much so that they felt it was not good enough to bury Jews in.
- Judas resorts to this place shortly afterwards and kills himself.

173. Before Pilate - Matthew 27:11-14; Mark 15:2-5, Luke 23:2-5, John 18:28-38

- 7:00 a.m.?
- Christ is now delivered to the Roman authorities after being found guilty of heresy by the Jews and condemned to death.
- The Jews could condemn people to death on religious matters, but could not execute judgment without approval by the Romans.
 - Note - the Jews executed by stoning so to fulfill prophecy with a crucifixion then the Romans had to perform the execution.
- The charges will be changed to sedition and rebellion.
- Pontius Pilate
 - Roman prefect governing over province of Judaea from AD 26-36.
 - We know very little about him historically.
 - Other stories we have involving him through writers like Josephus paint him as cruel and intolerant of the Jewish religion
 - Normally the Roman government was found in Caesarea, but at times of feasts or unrest they would make a strong presence felt in Jerusalem.
- Note that the rulers had not eaten the Passover yet (John 18:28) putting these events BEFORE the Passover.
- After a brief interview Pilate finds no reason to condemn Christ but does seem to find fault in the shoddy case the Jews were bringing before him.
- Finally hearing that Jesus was from Galilee (Luke 22:5), and thus technically under the jurisdiction of Herod, Pilate sends Christ away to Herod.

174. Before Herod - Luke 23:6-12

- Herod Antipas
 - Lived 20 BC to AD 39. Reigned as Tetrach of Galilee and Perea from AD. 6-39.
 - Same Herod that had John the Baptist arrested (Event #23) and killed (Event #67)
- When Christ refuses to perform on command, Herod has his soldiers mock Christ and send Him back to Pilate.

175. Barabbas - Matthew 27:15-26, Mark 15:6-15, Luke 23:13-25, John 18:39-40

- Barabbas
 - Probably a leader of a Zealot group who violently opposed Roman rule (Luke 23:19)
 - Many such leaders claimed to be the Messiah (Barabbas = “son of the father”)
- Pilate tries to avoid condemning Christ by passing the choice to the people. The Jewish rulers are prepared for this and incite the crowd to choose Barabbas.

Tried and Condemned

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place around 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan.

176. Scourged and Mocked - Matthew 27:26-30, Mark 15:15-19, John 19:1-3

- Pilate is hoping to placate the crowd with the release of Barabbas and by subjecting Christ to great physical punishment
- Romans did not merely execute or punish people, they humiliated them and made examples of them.
- Now that He is “delivered to be crucified”, Christ is in custody of the Roman military
 - These Roman soldiers are likely not Italian at all, but from Syria or another nearby region.
 - Scourging - precursor to execution. Subject is stripped, tied to a post, and flogged by one or two soldiers.
 - Crown of thorns - possibly a cruel joke on the Civic Crown, a military award that the Caesars often wore.
 - Purple or scarlet robe - denotes authority, colors worn by royalty or military officers
 - Reed - used in place of a scepter
 - Spitting and hitting

177. The Final Rejection - John 19:4-16

- Some of my sources have this account with the release of Barabbas in Event #175. There are enough differences that I think this is a separate event.
- Pilate is probably hoping that the punishment and humiliation that he has poured out on Christ will satisfy the crowd.
- The Jews go so far in their rejection of Christ that they willingly accept a pagan ruler (vs. 15).

178. Carrying the Cross - Matthew 27:31-33, Mark 15:20-22, Luke 23:26-33, John 19:16-17

- Part of the humiliation of a Roman crucifixion was the victim carrying his cross (usually just the horizontal beam) to the place of execution
- Christ is so weakened from His beatings that He cannot carry His cross. Simon of Cyrene (a Greek/Roman colony in modern Lybia) to carry the cross.
- Despite it's significance, there is some debate as to where Calvary is. I personally think the site known as Gordon's Calvary is the most likely of proposed sites.

The Crucifixion - Part I

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place around 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan.

179. The Crucifixion - Part I - Matthew 27:33-56, Mark 15:22-41, Luke 23:33-49, John 19:17-30

- There is quite a lot of action that takes place during the six hours that Christ is on the cross, so we will subdivide this event to deal with everything that occurs
 - Note - I am going to follow the chronology found in John A. Broadus' *Harmony of the Gospels*.
- A. The First Three Hours - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
1. Offered a sedative - Mt. 27:34, Mk. 15:23
 - a) This was probably a sedative to ease the suffering to follow
 - b) PROPHECY - Psalm 69:21
 2. Crucified between two thieves - Mt. 27:38, Mk. 15:27, Lk. 23:33-34, Jn. 19:18
 - a) Who were these thieves? Probably Jewish rebel leaders.
 - b) PROPHECY - dying amongst sinners - Isaiah 53:12
 - c) PROPHECY - crucifixion - Psalm 22:16, Zechariah 12:10
 - d) 1st Saying - "Father, forgive them..." - Lk. 23:34
 3. Gambling for His garments - Mt. 27:35-36, Mk. 15:24, Lk. 23:34, Jn. 19:24
 - a) PROPHECY - Psalm 22:18
 4. Pilate's superscription - Mt. 27:37, Mk. 15:26, Lk. 23:38, Jn. 19:19-22
 - a) This is the official charge so onlookers knew who the criminal was and why they were being crucified
 - b) Piecing together the accounts, the full text probably read: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews"
 - c) Why three languages?
 - (1) Hebrew - the local language of the people
 - (2) Latin - the official language of government
 - (3) Greek - the universal language of business
 5. John and Mary - Jn. 19:25-27
 - a) 2nd Saying - "Woman, behold..." - John 19:26-27
 - b) Even in His great agony note that Christ here takes the effort to see that His earthly mother is provided for.
 6. The mocking crowd - Mt. 27:39-43, Mk. 15:29-32, Lk. 23:35-37
 - a) PROPHECY - Psalm 22:7
 - b) This is the same crowd that hailed Christ as Messiah in the Triumphal Entry (Event #139)
 7. The two thieves - Mt. 27:44, Mk. 15:32, Lk. 23:39-43
 - a) 3rd Saying - "Today shalt thou..." - Luke 23:43
 - b) Only two individuals are mentioned as having their opinions changed about Christ through the events of the Crucifixion: this thief and the centurion.

The Crucifixion - Part II

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place around 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan.
- Special Note - Jews will begin celebrating the Passover on the evening of April 14 this year. At least by the modern Jewish calendar, the anniversary of the Crucifixion is also April 14, and the Empty Tomb's anniversary is April 18.

179. The Crucifixion - Part II - Matthew 27:33-56, Mark 15:22-41, Luke 23:33-49, John 19:17-30

- Note - I am going to follow the chronology found in John A. Broadus' *Harmony of the Gospels*.
 - Up until this point, little has happened that can be deemed miraculous. Now many miraculous events occur marking the significance of the event.
- A. The Second Three Hours - 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.
1. Darkness - Mt. 27:45-47, Mk. 15:33-35, Lk. 23:44-45
 - a) Can we explain this by natural means?
 - (1) No. A solar eclipse cannot happen during a full moon and wouldn't last barely more than seven minutes.
 - (2) Early historians Thallus and Phlegon make mention of a darkness/eclipse that may be this event.
 - b) The Bible is silent about what darkness was and its purpose. I would assume that Christ had now become sin for us - II Cor. 5:2, Isa. 53:10
 2. Death - Mt. 27:48-50,
 - a) 4th Saying - "Eli, Eli..." - Mt. 15:46, Mk. 15:34
 - (1) This cry seems to break the silence of the past three hours
 - (2) Prophesied about in Psalm 22:1
 - (3) Spoken, and preserved here, in Aramaic.
 - b) 5th Saying - "I thirst" - Mt. 27:48-49, Mk. 15:35, Jn. 19:28-29
 - (1) Matthew and Mark have the offering of vinegar to Christ but only John has the request.
 - (2) vinegar - soured wine, probably a cheap painkiller
 - (3) Matthew and Mark have the crowd continuing to mock Christ.
 - c) "Loud voice" - Mt. 27:50, Mk. 15:37, Lk. 23:46
 - (1) A cry, scream, or groan that is inarticulate
 - d) 6th Saying - "It is finished" - Jn. 19:30
 - (1) This is more than the time on the cross coming to a close. It is a cry of victory as the Christ's sacrifice nears completion.
 - e) 7th Saying - "Father into thy hands..." - Lk. 23:46
 - (1) Quote/Prophecy from Psalm 31:5 maybe?
 - (2) Christ submitting Himself and His sacrifice to God - Isaiah 53:11
 - f) Death - Mt. 27:50, Mk. 15:37, Lk. 23:46, Jn. 19:30
 - (1) "gave up the ghost", etc. means to release the spirit from the body

3. Signs

- a) Note - I think these happen at the moment of Christ's death
- b) Veil of Temple rent - Mt. 27:51, Mk. 15:38, Lk. 23:45
 - (1) This is the curtain hanging in the Temple to separate the Holy of Holies.
 - (2) Based on measurements given by Josephus and misc. rabbis, it may have measured 82 feet high, 24 feet wide, 4 inches thick.
- c) Earthquake - Mt. 27:51
- d) Tombs opened, resurrections - Mt. 27:52-53
 - (1) Wish we knew more about this one. It really fascinated me.
 - (a) Probably the earthquake causes once sealed and covered graves to be opened to view.
 - (b) These are not repaired immediately because of the Passover.
 - (c) The bodies are resurrected after Christ's resurrection (I Cor. 15:20) and not immediately.
- e) Centurion - Mt. 27:54, Mk. 15:39, Lk. 23:47
 - (1) Even the hardened Roman soldier realizes something significant has taken place.
- f) Witnesses - Mt. 27:55-56, Mk. 15:40-41, Lk. 23:48-49
 - (1) Even those that had mocked Christ are moved by the events.
 - (2) "Smote their breasts" - In token of alarm, fear, and anguish. (Albert Barnes)

The Temporary Tomb

Introduction

- The events covered here should take place between Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan, and Sunday, the 18th of Nisan.

180. Piercing Christ's Side - John 19:31-37

- Because of the coming Sabbath (the Passover holiday, NOT Saturday), the executions are hurried by breaking the victim's legs.
- Breaking the victim's legs would make it extremely difficult to breathe and very shortly cause suffocation.
- Spear - possibly the Roman *pilum*, a javelin/spear about 6 1/2 feet long including a 2 foot long iron shank with spear head.
- Blood and Water - the best medical explanation I can find for this is that blood loss brought on hypovolemic shock, which caused fluid to build around the heart. The spear punctured through the pericardium (the sac around the heart) and released the fluid there.
- Prophecies:
 - Broken bones - Psalm 34:20, type in Exodus 12:46
 - Pierced - Zechariah 12:10

181. Burial - Matthew 27:57-61, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:31-42

- Joseph of Arimathea - member of Sanhedrin, secret follower of Christ
- Nicodemus - only John mentions him (three times in fact)
- Fulfilled prophecy about rich man's tomb - Isaiah 53:9
- Myrrh and Aloes - 100 Roman pounds is about 75 modern pounds. This is WAY more than needed. Two reasons: great honor for Christ's burial or an attempt to preserve the body through the Passover until it can be properly prepared for burial.
- For some more information about Jewish burial practices, see Event #104 on Lazarus.

182. The Guard - Matthew 27:62-66

- The Jews understood Christ's claim that he would rise again and seek security for the tomb.
- These troops were probably from a contingent of soldiers assigned to aid in guarding the Temple.
- Seal - we see this in Daniel 6:17.

BONUS! Christ Between The Cross and the Resurrection

- Though His physical body was dead, Christ did not cease to exist (2 Cor. 5:8)
- There isn't much light shed on this time, but here's what we may gather:
 - John 20:17 - Hasn't been to Heaven during this time
 - I Peter 3:18-22 - Preached to captivity
 - Preached means proclaims. He's not sharing the Gospel, He is announcing His victory

- Many scholars believe that He is in “Paradise” as described in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 (Event #122)

183. The Resurrection - Matthew 28:2-4

- The Biblical account deals in depth with the discovery of the Empty Tomb but barely touches the actual Resurrection.
- The Resurrection takes place sometime after sunset on Saturday. By dawn the Tomb is empty.
- Matthew’s brief account here is perhaps not even the Resurrection itself, but the opening of the Tomb so that all could see that it was empty.
- vs. 4 - the soldiers pass out with fear. We will see them again next week...

Resurrection Morning

Introduction

- This whirlwind of activity begins at daybreak on Sunday, the 18th of Nisan.

184. The Discovery of the Empty Tomb - Matthew 28:1,5-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-8, John 20:1

- This group of ladies has come to finish the burial preparations that had been cut short when Christ was buried.
- Three miraculous things show the Resurrection has taken place: the stone rolled away, the angels, and the missing body (though the empty grave clothes remain).
- Matthew and Mark have two angels present, while Mark and John have two. I think these supposed discrepancy is explained in that only one of the two angels spoke.
- It appears from John's account that Mary Magdalene only sees the stone rolled away before running for the disciples. The other ladies enter and see the angels.

185. Peter and John at the Tomb - John 20:2-10

- Mary Magdalene reports to the disciples that the body of Christ is missing, even though it appears she did not even enter the tomb.
- Though not mentioned by name, the second disciple is John himself.
- John (the youngest disciple) outruns Peter but stops at the entrance of the tomb. Peter catches up and runs right in.
- No angel is present to proclaim the Resurrection, but John sees enough that he believes (vs. 8)

186. Appears to Mary Magdalene - Mark 16:9-11, John 20:11-18

- Mary must have followed Peter and John, though at a much slower pace in her grief, to the tomb.
- Mary is so distraught that she does not recognize angels or Jesus.
- "Touch me not" - means "Don't cling to me". She grasps Him in the old familiar way but He is now glorified and things will not be the same between His earthly followers and Himself.

187. Appears to the Women - Matthew 28:9-10, Luke 24:9-11

- After appearing to Mary, Christ now appears to other women who are still making their way back to Jerusalem.
- Luke sort of summarizes the facts of the women reporting back to the disciples.
- Luke also states that the disciples did not believe their account. This must be before Peter and John visit the empty tomb or perhaps it the other disciples who are waiting for Peter and John to return.

188. Report of the Watch - Matthew 28:11-15

- “some of the guard” - could have been up to 16 soldiers total, all of which appear to have abandoned their post at this point.
- It is commonly reported that in the Roman army it was the death penalty for failing you duty while on guard. The United States’ own Uniform Code of Military Justice allows for the death penalty for such a crime (Article 113 if you want to verify).
- Sooooo... the “official” story is:
 - Multiple guards fell asleep on duty even though it was punishable by death
 - A bunch of ordinary men snuck by them
 - Those ordinary men *SILENTLY* broke open a sealed doorway
 - Those ordinary men *SILENTLY* rolled the large stone away to open the doorway
 - Those ordinary men *SILENTLY* carried a grown man’s body past them
 - The pungent odors of the spices used to prepare the body did not come rolling out of the sealed chamber and cause any kind of stir
- If that’s the story they had to stick with, imagine the story they were trying to cover up!

The Ascension

Introduction

- THE LAST LESSON! WE ARE FINALLY FINISHED!!!
- The events covered being on Sunday, the 18th of Nisan and cover 40 days following.

189. Appears to Simon Peter - Luke 24:34, I Corinthians 15:5

- This event is only mentioned twice but seems to occur in this time frame.
- It is poignant to see that the first of the disciples to meet the risen Christ was the same who had denied Him thrice.

190. On the Road to Emmaus - Mark 16:12-13, Luke 24:13-35

- Emmaus was a small town located about 7 miles northwest of Jerusalem.
- These two disciples (not members of the Twelve) were probably returning home following the Passover, not to mention the Crucifixion and Resurrection.
- Cleopas - vs. 18 - believed to be Alphaeus, father of James (Mark 3:18) and husband of a Mary (John 19:25)
- vs. 30-31,34 - I like to imagine that as Christ broke bread these disciples saw the nail prints and realized it was Christ.

191. Appears to the Eleven (without Thomas) - Mark 16:14-18, Luke 24:36-49, John 20:19-23, I Corinthians 15:5

- According to Luke, this event happens as the reports are finishing from the previous event.
- vs. 23 - only God can forgive sins. I believe this verse is more descriptive of the disciple's task of proclaiming the Gospel and its importance.

192. Appears to the Eleven (with Thomas) - John 20:24-29

- vs. 27 - note that Christ meets Thomas' challenge from vs. 25. Thomas doesn't need it to believe.
- vs. 29 - I think this includes us.

193. Appears to Fishermen - John 21:1-24

- It appears that the disciples have returned to Galilee at this point as Christ had told them to do (see Matthew 28:7, etc.)
- Peter returns to his old career of fishing and others follow.
- In Event #29 (Luke 5:1-11), a similar miraculous haul of fish takes place. I wonder if the two are related. The first catch took place as Christ called the fisherman to follow him. The second took place as Christ commissioned them to proclaim the Gospel.
- vs. 11 - Why is it recorded that there are 153 fish caught? Why did they take time to even count them?
- Often you will here sermons/lessons on the conversation between Peter and Christ and the different Greek words they use and their significance. For your reference:

| "Love" Chart | | | |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Verse | Christ's Love | Peter's "Love" | Christ's Response |
| 15 | <i>agape</i> | <i>phileo</i> | feed the baby lambs |
| 16 | <i>agape</i> | <i>phileo</i> | tend the sheep |
| 17 | <i>phileo</i> | <i>phileo</i> | feed the sheep |
| <i>Phileo</i> - to be a friend, fond of, or like. Used in word <i>Philadelphia</i> . | | | |
| <i>Agape</i> - love based on choice. Love shown in action or sacrifice. Sometimes translated in the KJV as "charity". | | | |

- vs. 18-19 - tradition states that Peter was crucified upside-down.

194. 500+ - Matthew 28:16-20, I Corinthians 15:6

- Christ gathers over 500 of his followers and gives them the Great Commission.

195. Appears to James - I Corinthians 15:7

- This is James the half-brother of Christ (Galatians 1:18-19, 2:11-12). He is the probable author of the book of James and believed to be the pastor of the church at Jerusalem.

196. The Ascension - Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53, Acts 1:3-12

- The disciples are once again in Jerusalem. Christ appears to them on the Mount of Olives.
- Christ ascends back into Heaven with the promise that He will return.

IN CLOSING:

- Hopefully I still have enough time to read this...
- We've already covered the saga that follows in our study of the Book of Acts.
- Our previous series on the Book of Daniel laid the prophetic background for Christ and the End Times.
- NEXT WEEK - we begin our study of the fulfillment of all things: THE BOOK OF REVELATION.